

# MACMILLAN'S MAGAZINE.

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## THE YARD MEASURE EXTENDED TO THE STARS.

BY PROFESSOR KELLAND.

As soon as astronomy had learnt to know its position, it began to suspect that this earth, with its sun, and moon, and planets, and comets—the whole solar system—is but a speck in the vast firmament of the heavens. The more men worked and thought, the stronger grew the conviction that Sirius, the little twinkling star, must be a sun, immensely brighter than our own. For they had tried in vain to find out his distance. In vain! The distance always came out infinite. The measuring line placed in the hand of man shrank into nothingness in respect to the whereabouts of the nearest of those little orbs, and astronomy retired abashed. Do you ask me what is the measuring line which man has in his hand to apply to the stars? I shall tell you that it is no small matter as men count smallness. It is two hundred millions of miles—a line long enough, you would think; yet this line actually shrank into nothingness so absolute, that, half a century ago, it seemed as hopeful to mount to the stars as to compass their distance with so puny a line. But the thing has been done at last, and triumphantly done. We know the distance of a few of the nearest stars now, pretty accurately, at any rate. And I propose to endeavour to convey an idea of how this knowledge has been attained.

Well, then, to begin at the beginning, the first line to which all others are referred, the primary unit, is the yard-measure, by which ladies' dresses are

measured—nothing more nor less. It does not concern us to enquire what that yard-measure is. Suffice it that the legislature provide means to prevent its fluctuation from year to year, or from century to century. Now, the yard can readily be multiplied to a considerable extent—for example, into a chain of twenty-two yards—and with this chain a line of three or four miles can be measured on the earth's surface. The yard is thus expanded into miles. It is no easy matter, certainly, to measure a few miles on the surface of the earth; but it is possible, and has been done. An extension of this process would, of course, measure a very long line; but this is not necessary. Having once got over a few miles, the yard-measure, and the steel-chain, and all similar appliances are discarded, and the measured line itself is assumed as a new measuring-rod. True, it cannot be carried about from place to place. Mahomet cannot go to the mountain; so the mountain must be brought to Mahomet. This is done by making direction serve as the evidence of distance. If you measure off on the paper a line a foot long, and take a point somewhere over the centre of it, you will see how the angles of direction from the ends of the line depend on its distance from the line. So, conversely, if a church-steeple, or some other prominent object, be visible from both ends of the line measured on the earth's surface, its distance from either of them can be determined at once, by means of

angles, without approaching the object at all. You see then how we can get a good long line of sixty or seventy miles. Now, as the earth is a sphere or nearly so, if you travel due north a 360th part of the earth's circumference, you will find that the pole star has assumed a position one degree higher in the heavens. Accordingly, if you can measure distances and angles, the determination of the circumference of the earth is reduced to a matter of mere multiplication. The old Indians had got thus far; the old Greeks too. Two hundred and thirty years before the Christian era, Eratosthenes, the librarian of the Alexandrian library, observed the meridian height of the sun at Alexandria, at the time of the summer solstice, and then set to work to measure the distance up the Nile to Syene, where the granite quarries still show the marks of the chisel that cut out those wonderful obelisks from them. Here he found, or somebody found for him, a telescope ready to his hand—the earliest telescope on record. It was a reflecting telescope, like Herschel's, polished by nature's own machinery. The mirror was the surface of standing water, and the tube was one of those vertical shafts which, as in Joseph's well, have stood the wear of ages, and are wonderful even in the land of the pyramids and the sphinxes. Far, far down in the bowels of the earth, the brighter stars were visible by day. This telescope disclosed the fact, that Syene is just under the northern tropic. And so Eratosthenes, like his great benefactor Alexander, conquered the world. *He* did not weep because there were no more worlds to conquer; for were not the bright orbs, the allies of his first victory, like the Thebans, sure to become an easy prey to his chariot-wheels? But the work of Eratosthenes was done, and they gave him as a reward a mountain in the moon, which bears his name.

To be sure, the 250,000 stadia which Eratosthenes estimated as the circumference of the earth, was a rough enough approximation as compared with the precision of modern times. But it was a great work for one man. Since then,

the nations of Europe have set themselves to the task. One instance deserves mention.

In 1791-2, the National Convention of France conceived the magnificent idea of establishing a new standard for everything—morals, money, and measure. "Let the heavens," they said, "furnish new units of time, and the earth new units of space. Let the week, and the month, and the year yield up their ancient prerogatives. Let the former history of the world be forgotten, and let all history date from this time. Let the month be divided into thirty days, and let the sabbath occur every tenth day. Let the day be divided into ten hours, and let new dials be constructed to show them. Let a girdle be drawn round the earth, which shall connect Paris with the poles: let this girdle be the standard of measure, and let men be sent out to ascertain its amount." A magnificent order, truly! Yet it does seem easy enough to count by thirties and by tens—to make the month thirty days, and the week ten; but to measure the circumference of the earth, this is a work, a labour! It so happened, however, that the thirty days, and the new sundials, and the unscriptural sabbaths failed to struggle into existence—a higher power protected France from herself; whilst the measure of the meridians—a work beset with appalling difficulties—was accomplished; and the *mètre*, the ten-millionth part of the measured quadrant of the earth's circumference, is the national standard throughout France to this day.

The work was carried on when France was embroiled with all Europe. The great men who executed it had to combat with national prejudices and popular superstitions in a foreign land. Privation, anxiety, and fatigue laid some of the foremost of them low. One owed his life to the protection afforded by a Spanish prison; another broke his heart, on regaining his liberty, by the discovery that the observations he had made from his prison windows would not bear the breath of the free air.

M. Arago, in his autobiography, gives an amusing, but perhaps an exaggerated, sketch of his own share in these labours. He tells us that he commenced by pacing to and fro, for the space of six months, on the narrow platform of a rock which overlooks the Mediterranean, to watch for the signal-light from the island of Iviza. From this airy spot he was transferred to the closer atmosphere of the castle of Belver, wounded, and a prisoner. Here he had the satisfaction of reading in the Spanish papers a detailed account of his own execution. Judging that the announcement was but the prelude to the event, he looked about for the means of escape. From the window of his prison he finds he can leap into the sea, and he resolves on doing so; conceiving, as he says, "that it is as well to be drowned as to be hanged." But he is not drowned. He reaches a ship, and is conveyed to the coast of Africa, where he finds the Moors almost as uncivilized as the Spaniards. So he is not sorry when he is allowed to return to his work. Once more in Spain, he is not long in discovering that brigandage is one of the institutions of the country. His temporary station, on the top of a mountain near Culléra, is visited, one stormy night, by the chief bandit of the district. The astronomer makes him his friend, and the work proceeds merrily under his protection.

Enough. We have measured the earth, but we are a great way from the stars still. Our yard measure has brought us thousands of miles on our journey; but the stars are millions of millions of miles away, and how are we to get at them? We shall see. Remember, then, that, when we had a base line of a few miles, we could determine the distance of an object seen from either end, by means of angles alone. In the same way, we get at the distance of the sun, or of a planet, by the longer base-line of the earth itself. We get at it roughly, it must be confessed. Copernicus, Tycho, even Kepler himself, had no idea that the sun is so far from us as he really is. Had the sun been fixed im-

movably in the heavens, it might have been easy, or, at least, it might have been deemed easy, to compare his distance with the size of the earth. But the sun wanders among the stars and rolls round the earth, and thus seems to defy the efforts of the measurer. It was the good fortune of James Gregory to point out a method by which his distance may be determined, spite of his unsteadiness. The orbits of the two planets, Mercury and Venus, lie between the sun and the earth, so that those planets occasionally cross the face of the sun—Mercury frequently, Venus more rarely. It occurred to Gregory that observers at different parts of the earth's surface would witness a transit across different parts of the sun—one seeing it cross the centre, another observing it graze the edge. And, as the time it took in crossing might be readily ascertained in either case, the places at which it crossed would be thereby determined. And thus, knowing the positions of the two places of observation, and the corresponding positions of the projection of the planet on the sun's disk, the determination of the distance of the sun would, by a little help from theory, be reduced to a mere matter of triangles. Perhaps Gregory hardly appreciated the full value of the suggestion he was making. At any rate, nothing followed the publication of his hint for a great number of years. At length, about the beginning of the last century, it assumed, in the mind of Halley, the definite and practicable form which renders it now the corner-stone of astronomy. Halley perceived that the planet Venus was greatly to be preferred to Mercury for the determination of the sun's distance from the earth. His lucid statements and earnest exhortations aroused the whole astronomical world, and a transit of Venus was anxiously awaited. Halley himself, indeed, when he directed attention to the importance of the method, had no hope of living to see it tested. He stood like Moses on the top of Pisgah, and looked on the Promised Land; but to cross the Jordan was not his earthly lot. He had been laid with

his fathers many a year before the occurrence of the transit from which he had prepared men to expect so much. At length, in 1761, the looked-for time arrived. Now transits, which are of very rare occurrence, when they do happen, occur in pairs, at an interval of only eight years. Thus, when, after anxious waiting, astronomers beheld the transit of 1761, they knew that in eight years they should witness another. It was probably this circumstance of a second transit to fall back upon that rendered the observations of 1761 so little worth. That date being past, and the occasion lost, the succeeding transit of 1769 was all that the world had to rely on for another century. Had this opportunity been again lost, what a different position would our astronomy and our navigation have been in from that which they now occupy! Happily, all Europe was astir. Men were sent out north and south, east and west, to make the whole length and breadth of the globe available base-lines. England fitted out an expedition to the South Seas, and placed it under the command of Captain Cook. Who has not read Cook's first voyage? Most of us have devoured it, every part but the account of the observation of the transit, the real object of the expedition. Possibly it would have been otherwise had the astronomer Green returned to tell his own tale. But it was not so to be. His body was consigned to the deep during the homeward voyage. But his observation was made under favourable circumstances, and is invaluable. In this respect, Green was happier than some of his fellow-labourers. The Abbé Chappe erected his observatory in California, and died ere his work was well complete. M. Le Gentil had been sent out to Pondicherry to observe the previous transit of 1761; but the winds and the waves detained him on ship-board until after the event had taken place. But Le Gentil was a man of spirit, not easily discouraged. Accordingly, he resolved to lessen the chance of a second disappointment, by remaining at Pondicherry until 1769

for the second transit. But, alas! alas! after eight years of weary waiting, a little cloud effectually hid the phenomenon from his sight, and Le Gentil had to return to France empty as he left it. Poor Le Gentil! for him there is no cross of honour in life, no national monument at death. He is like the poor subaltern who leads the forlorn hope, and perishes in an unsuccessful attack. Let us drop a tear to his memory and that of Green ere we proclaim that the stronghold has fallen!

The solar system is now measured. The distance of the sun is now ascertained with positive certainty. Seven different base-lines, a host of independent observations, all concur in giving the distance of the sun from the earth (in round numbers) as ninety-five millions of miles. It is a grand era in astronomy. What would Copernicus, what would Tycho have said? They, worthy men, great astronomers as they were, never dreamt that the sun is a tenth part as far away. Even Halley, when he proposed this most successful problem, laboured under the delusion that he was some thirty millions of miles nearer the sun than he actually was.

Well, we have extended our yard-measure to a pretty good length now. As the earth goes round the sun every year in an orbit nearly circular, the position we shall occupy six months hence will be just a hundred and ninety millions of miles from where we now are. And we can observe a star from both ends of this line, just as we observed a steeple previously from the two ends of a field. Our measuring tape for the stars is a hundred and ninety millions of miles. Yet, great as this distance is, so inconceivably far away are the stars, that all the refinements of modern science were unable, half a century ago, to deduce anything about them but this negative conclusion—that the nearest of them is at least a hundred thousand times as far from us as spring is from autumn, or summer from winter—a hundred thousand times a hundred and ninety millions of miles; no star nearer than that! You cannot think of such dis-



tances as these—the mind is unable to grasp them. Dobrizhoffer, the Jesuit missionary, tells us that the Abipones of Paraguay, amongst whom he laboured, have no better mode of expressing numbers above a score or so, than by taking up a handful of sand or grass and exhibiting it. They had to pass through a deal of schooling to learn to count up to a thousand. The Professor at Angers, wishing to exhibit to his class the relative magnitudes of the sun and the earth, poured sixteen pecks of wheat on his lecture table. "This," said he, "represents the sun, and one of the grains represents the earth." If we try a similar method, we shall not succeed so well. Let us, however, try. You have some faint idea of three thousand miles, from having painfully measured it on the Atlantic, it may be. The thirtieth of an inch, on the other hand, you can estimate well enough. It is the dot you place over the letter *i*, as you write. Well, suppose this dot to represent the distance between Liverpool and New York; then will the actual distance—three thousand miles—represent the interval, nearer than which there is no fixed star. Three thousand miles of dots, when each separate dot stands for three thousand miles! Or you may help your mind, or cheat yourself into the belief that you do so, by some such process as the following. Light travels with such a velocity, that it would fly round the earth, at the equator, eight times in a second. Yet there is no star so near us, but that its light occupies more than three years on its journey to the earth. The whole starry firmament, seemingly so bright, may, for ought we know, have been quenched in everlasting darkness, three years ago. Were such a catastrophe conceivable, the lamps of heaven would go out, one by one, to mortal eyes, year after year, and century after century, until, some two thousand years hence, the faint light of stars of the sixth and seventh magnitude would alone hold on its journey.

All that was known about the distances of the stars thirty or forty years

ago, was this negative fact. No star nearer than the parallaxic unit, as it is called, of twenty millions of millions of miles! Whether any were so near, or anything approaching the distance, nobody could say. At length the question of distance was resolved. And here occurs one of those singular duplications—twins in the births of thought—with which the history of science abounds. The first determination of the distance of a star from the earth was worked out simultaneously by two men, under circumstances which precluded the possibility of mutual assistance; and the results were presented to the world within a few days of each other. The memoir of Bessel, which announced a sensible parallax for 61 *Cygni*, appeared on the 13th of December, 1838. That of Professor Henderson, in which the parallax of a *Centauri* was established, was read to the Astronomical Society on the 6th of January, 1839, and had of course been in the hands of the Society some days previously. There was no desire on the part of either astronomer to contest the claims of the other. Many years subsequently it was my good fortune to unite with Professor Henderson in entertaining his illustrious friend, Bessel; and it was a gratifying sight to witness the warmth of affection with which these two good men welcomed each other as fellow-workers in the same field. They have both gone to their rest—Henderson too early for science; Bessel at an advanced age, and full of honours.

The stars which Henderson and Bessel selected were in one respect very unlike. That of Henderson is a bright star in the southern hemisphere; that of Bessel is a faint inconspicuous star in the northern. But the stars have one thing in common—both have large proper motions. They are not fixed stars, in the strict sense of the word; they move on by a few seconds annually. And this circumstance of a proper motion was an argument in the minds of the astronomers, that those stars are in close proximity to our system. This fact, and not their size,

was the ground on which they were selected. Professor Henderson commenced his calculations with a different object, and only diverted them into the channel of distance when he ascertained the amount of proper motion which the star has. His observations were not undertaken with a view to this question; they were ordinary meridian observations. And it is not to be wondered at that astronomers were very cautious in admitting results so obtained, when it is considered that observations of this kind are beset with such numerous sources of error, in refraction, aberration, and the like. The method adopted by Bessel, on the other hand, obviates those sources of error. It has some analogy to the method of obtaining the distance of the sun by means of a transit of Venus, inasmuch as the observations are not those of the absolute position of one body, but of the relative positions of two.

The basis on which the operations are conducted is this:—Certain stars are so nearly in the same direction in the heavens as not to be easily separated. Some of these are in reality double—twin stars revolving about each other—at any rate, physically connected. Others have no such connexion; and it is argued that, in certain cases, the smaller of the two is likely to be at an enormous distance behind the other. When such is actually the case, there will be a change of the relative positions of the two as viewed from different parts of the earth's orbit, and the amount of that change will depend on the proximity of the nearer star to our system, in precisely the same way as a tree will shift its place more or less rapidly, with respect to a distant hill, as the spectator is carried along in his journey. It is on stars so circumstanced that observations with the view of detecting a parallax were instituted by Bessel. No absolute measures of position of either star are required; simply the relative distances and directions of the one with respect to the other. Thus all sources of error due to refraction, aberration, and many other causes, which equally effect both stars, are got rid of.

The conclusion may be stated in a single sentence. The star selected by Henderson is only a little beyond the parallax unit (twenty millions of millions of miles); that selected by Bessel is about three times as far away. Other stars have been reached, but these two are the nearest known. With a trembling and uncertain hand, astronomers have stretched out their line to one or two stars ten times as far away as the farthest of these. But the great host of heaven lie incalculably farther back. Shall we ever reach them? Judging from present appearances, we are compelled to answer in the negative. The stars, as we gaze into the sky, seem to defy us. For what do we see there? Close around us we see bright lamps pretty equally distributed over the vault of heaven. They twinkle and dance before us, as though conscious of the close proximity of our gaze. But let us look again. Clasp the whole vault of heaven, we see a belt of faint light, some twelve degrees in breadth. This is the milky way, the galactic circle. To the ancients, it was part of the milk which washed the purple stains from the lily; to the moderns, it is the universe itself—the stupendous whole, of which the brighter stars are but the portions which lie nearest to this little spot of earth. You may understand this if you bear in mind that the spherical appearance of the heavens is a necessary consequence of vast and unknown distance. There is no reality in this appearance. The arrangement of the stars is somewhat like an extended sheet of cardboard, of small thickness. Or, rather, you should imagine a vast plain planted with orange trees, all loaded with yellow fruit. These oranges in countless myriads are the stars. We are situated near the centre of this grove. Our sun is a small orange; the earth and the planets are tiny buds grouped around it. The neighbouring branches are thinly supplied with fruit, and few fruit-stalks bear more than a single orange. But the grove is of boundless extent. Looking on every side, the eye takes in

myriads of golden balls, extending away right and left, until individual oranges are no longer distinguishable, except by the glow of light which they send to the eye. This glow is the milky way. Looking upwards, or downwards, from the milky way, there is no such profusion of scattering. Much bright fruit does, indeed, cluster on the upper and lower branches; and an unpractised eye is deceived into the belief that the number is infinite. But the eye of an astronomer, armed with proper instruments, finds it far otherwise. He can count the stars; he can gauge the heavens; and the conclusion to which he will arrive is, that the number which the eye takes in diminishes gradually from the galactic circle upwards or downwards. And this diminution is not only regular, but is very great indeed. From such considerations as these, conjecture has ripened into conviction, that the solar system is a part of the milky way; that the scattered bright stars are those parts of the same which lie in our immediate neighbourhood; and that the whole group forms a vast, extended, rolling prairie of stars. The milky way is, therefore, to human apprehension, nothing less than the universe itself. True, there may be other galactic systems, other prairies, other orange groves, as far separated from ours as the prairies of America are from the groves of Europe. Some of the remarkable nebulae seem to hint at the possibility of the thing. On such a subject it is premature to speculate. Now, it is only those oranges that cluster round us, those which grow on the same branch with our sun, that we have succeeded in stretching out our hand to. What arithmetic shall suffice to count the distance of those which lie on the remoter trees of our grove, the faintest groups of the milky way?

What imagination shall wing its flight to those still more shadowy groups which constitute the unresolved nebulae? The yard-measure is too puny; the hand of man is too feeble. An angel's hand must grasp the rod that shall mete out the length and breadth of this golden grove. Man has gone up through the immensity of space and strained his line till it will bear no more. Other generations may mount higher, but only to find the vast circles ever widening beyond. The position which we have reached is a lofty one; but, lofty as it is, future ages shall use it as their point of departure. It is an ennobling thought to console us amid our many failures. Man rises by the aid of that Divine faculty which pertains to him alone of all created beings—the faculty of accumulating stores of knowledge, of working in succession, of acting on intelligence transmitted from age to age. The great English philosopher, Bacon, describes man as the “interpreter of nature.” But this is not his highest, not his characteristic designation; for, are not the beasts, are not the birds, are not the very insects interpreters of nature? It is as the interpreter of man, the interpreter of man's records, that man stands distinguished. Herein reason transcends instinct, that its gifts are transmissive and cumulative. Mind does not stand supported by the mind which exists around it, not simply, not mainly. There is a higher and a broader support. The minds of the great of bygone ages live and work in the breasts of their successors. The old Greeks, I suppose, knew this, and embodied it in the fable of Athene, the goddess of knowledge, who sprang into existence not as a naked, helpless child, but as a grown-up being, clad in complete armour, from the head of Zeus.

## RAVENSHOE

BY HENRY KINGSLEY, AUTHOR OF "GEOFFREY HAMLYN."

## CHAPTER XLIV.

## ANOTHER MEETING.

LORD ASCOT had been moved into South Audley Street, his town house, and Lady Ascot was there nursing him. General Mainwaring was off for Varna. But Lord Saltire had been a constant visitor, bringing with him very often Marston, who was, you will remember, an old friend of Lady Ascot.

It was not at all an unpleasant house to be in. Lord Ascot was crippled—he had been seized with paralysis at Epsom; and he was ruined. But every one knew the worst, and felt relieved by thinking that things could get no worse than worst, and so must get better.

In fact, every one admitted to the family party about that time remembered it as a very happy and quiet time indeed. Lord Ascot was their first object, of course; and a more gentle and biddable invalid than the poor fellow made can hardly be conceived. He was passionately fond of reading novels (a most reprehensible practice), and so was easily amused. Lord Saltire and he would play picquet; and every evening there would be three hours of whist, until the doctor looked in the last thing, and Lord Ascot was helped to bed.

Marston was always set to play with Lord Ascot, because Lord Saltire and Lady Ascot would not play against one another. Lord Saltire was, of course, one of the best players in Europe; and I really believe that Lady Ascot was not the worst by any means. I can see the party now. I can see Lady Ascot laying down a card, and looking at the same time at her partner, to call his attention to her lead. And I can see Lord Saltire take out his snuff-box thereat, as if he were puzzled, but not

alarmed. William would come sometimes and sit quietly behind Marston, or Lord Saltire, watching the game. In short, they were a very quiet pleasant party indeed.

One night—it was the very night on which Adelaide had lost her hat in the Park—there was no whist. Marston had gone down to Oxford suddenly, and William came in to tell them so. Lady Ascot was rather glad, she said, for she had a friend coming to tea, who did not play whist; so Lord Saltire and Lord Ascot sat down to picquet, and William talked to his aunt.

"Who is your friend, Maria?" asked Lord Saltire.

"A Mr. Bidder, a minister. He has written a book on the Revelations, which you really ought to read, James; it would suit you."

They both laughed.

"About the seven seals, hey?" said Lord Saltire; "*'septem phoca'*, as I remember Machynleth translated it at Eton once. We called him '*Vitulina*' ever after. The name stuck to him through life with some of us. A capital name for him, too! His fussy blundering in this war-business is just like his old headlong way of looking out words in his dictionary. He is an ass, Maria; and I will bet fifty pounds that your friend, the minister, is another."

"How can you know? at all events, the man he brings with him is none."

"Another minister?"

"Yes, a Moravian missionary from Australia."

"Then certainly another ass, or he would have gone as missionary to a less abominably detestable hole. They were all burnt into the sea there the other day. Immediately after which the rivers rose seventy feet, and drowned the rest of them."

Soon after were announced Mr. Bidder and Mr. Smith. Mr. Bidder was an entirely unremarkable man; but Mr. Smith was one of the most remarkable men I have ever seen, or rather heard—for externally there was nothing remarkable about him, except a fine forehead, and a large expressive grey eye, which, when he spoke to you, seemed to come back from a long distance, and fix itself upon yours. In manners he was perfect. He was rather taciturn, though always delighted to communicate information about his travels, in a perfectly natural way. If one man wanted information on botany, or what not, he was there to give it. If another wanted to hear about missionary work, he was ready for him. He never spoke or acted untruthfully for one instant. He never acted the free and easy man of the world, as some Roman-catholic priests do, imitating the real thing as well as Paul Bedford would imitate Fanny Ellsler. What made him remarkable was his terrible earnestness, and the feeling you had that his curious language was natural, and meant something, something very important indeed.

He has something to do with the story. The straws in the gutter have to do with the history of a man like Charles, a man who leaves all things to chance. And this man Smith is very worthy of notice, and so I have said thus much about him.

Mr. Bidder was very strong on the Russian war, which he illustrated by the Revelations. He was a good fellow, and well bred enough to see that his friend Smith was an object of greater interest to Lady Ascot than himself; so he "retired into" a book of prints, and left the field clear.

Mr. Smith sat by Lady Ascot, and William drew close up. Lady Ascot began by a common-place, of course.

"You have suffered great hardships among those savages, Mr. Smith, have you not?"

"Hardships! Oh, dear no, my dear lady. Our station was one of the pleasantest places in the whole earth, I believe; and we had a peaceful time.

When the old man is strong in me I wish I was back there."

"You did not make much progress with them, I believe?"

"None whatever. We found out after a year or two that it was hopeless to make them understand the existence of a God; and after that we stayed on to see if we could bring them to some knowledge of agriculture, and save them from their inevitable extermination, as the New Zealanders have been saved."

"And to no purpose?"

"None. For instance, we taught them to plant our potatoes for us. They did it beautifully, but in the night they dug them up and ate them. And in due season we waited that our potatoes should grow, and they grew not. Then they came to Brother Hillyar, my co-adjutor, an old man, now ruling ten cities for his master, and promised for rewards of flour to tell him why the potatoes did not grow. And he, loving them, gave them what they desired. And they told him that they had dug them up while we slept. And for two days I went about my business laughing in secret places, for which he tried to rebuke me, but could not, laughing himself. The Lord kept him waiting long, for he was seventy-four; but, doubtless, his reward is the greater."

William said, "You brought home a collection of zoological specimens, I think. They are in the Museum."

"Yes. But what I could not bring over were my live pets. I and my wife had a menagerie of our own—a great number of beasts"—

Mr. Bidder, looking up from his book, catching the last sentence only, said that the number of the beast was 666; and, then turning round, held himself ready to strike into the conversation, thinking that the time was come when he should hide his light no longer.

"The natives are very low savages, are they not, Mr. Smith?" said William. "I have heard that they cannot count above ten."

"Not so far as that," said Mr. Smith. "The tribe we were most among used to express all large unknown quantities

by 'eighty-four';<sup>1</sup> it was as *x* and *y* to them. That seems curious at first, does it not ?

William said it did seem curious, their choosing that particular number. But Mr. Bidder, dying to mount his hobby-horse, and not caring how, said it was not at all curious. If you multiplied the twelve tribes of Israel into the seven cities of refuge, there you were at once.

Mr. Smith said he thought he had made a little mistake. The number, he fancied, was ninety-four.

Lord Saltire, from the card-table, said that that made the matter clearer than before. For if you placed the Ten Commandments to the previous result you arrived at ninety-four, which was the number wanted. And his lordship, who had lost, and was consequently possibly cross, added that, if you divided the whole by the five foolish virgins, and pitched the four-and-twenty elders, neck and heels, into the result, you would find yourself much about where you started.

Mr. Bidder, who, as I said, was a good fellow, laughed, and Mr. Smith resumed the conversation once more; Lord Saltire seemed interested in what he said, and did not interfere with him.

"You buried poor Mrs. Smith out there," said Lady Ascot. "I remember her well. She was very beautiful as a girl."

"Very beautiful," said the missionary. "Yes; she never lost her beauty, do you know. That climate is very deadly to those who go there with the seeds of consumption in them. She had done a hard day's work before she went to sleep, though she was young. Don't you think so, Lady Ascot ?"

"A hard day's work; a good day's work, indeed. Who knows better than I?" said Lady Ascot. "What an awaking it must be from such a sleep as hers !"

<sup>1</sup> A fact with regard to one tribe, to the author's frequent confusion. Any number above two, whether of horses, cattle, or sheep, was always represented as being eighty-four. Invariably too with an adjective introduced after the word "four," which we don't use in a drawing-room.

"Beyond the power of human tongue to tell," said the missionary, looking dreamily as at something far away. "Show me the poet that can describe in his finest language the joy of one's soul when one wakes on a summer's morning. Who, then, can conceive or tell the unutterable happiness of the purified soul waking face to face with the King of Glory ?"

Lord Saltire looked at him curiously, and said to himself, "This fellow is in earnest. I have seen this sort of thing before. But seldom ! Yes, but seldom !"

"I should not have alluded to my wife's death," continued the missionary in a low voice, "but that her ladyship introduced the subject. And no one has a better right to hear of her than her kind old friend. She fell asleep on the Sabbath evening after prayers. We moved her bed into the verandah, Lady Ascot, that she might see the sunlight fade out on the tops of the highest trees—a sight she always loved. And from the verandah we could see through the trees Mount Joorma, laid out in endless folds of woodland, all purple and gold. And I thought she was looking at the mountain, but she was looking far beyond that, for she said, 'I shall have to wait thirty years for you, James, but I shall be very happy and very busy. The time will go quick enough for me, but it will be a slow weary time for you, my darling. Go home from here, my love, into the great towns, and see what is to be done there.' And so she went to sleep.

"I rebelled for three days. I went away into the bush, with Satan at my elbow all the time, through dry places, through the forest, down by lonely creek-sides, among the beasts and the birds. But on the third day the Lord wearied of me, and took me back, and I lay on his bosom again like a child. He will always take you home, my lord, if you come. After three days, after thrice twenty years, my lord. Time is nothing to Him."

Lord Saltire was looking on him with kindly admiration.

"There is something in it, my lord.



Depend upon it that it is not all a dream. Would not you give all your amazing wealth, all your honours, everything, to change places with me?"

"I certainly would," said Lord Saltire. "I have always been of opinion that there was something in it. I remember," he continued, turning to William, "expressing the same opinion to your father in the Fleet Prison once, when he had quarrelled with the priests for expressing some opinions which he had got from me. But you must take up with that sort of thing very early in life if you mean it to have any reality at all. I am too old now."<sup>1</sup>

Lord Saltire said this in a different tone from his usual one. In a tone that we have never heard him use before. There was something about the man Smith which, in spite of his quaint language, softened every one who heard him speak. Lady Ascot says it was the grace of God. I entirely agree with her ladyship.

"I came home," concluded the missionary, "to try some city work. My wife's nephew, John Marston, whom I expected to see here to-night, is going to assist me in this work. There seems plenty to do. We are at work in Southwark at present."

Possibly it was well that the company, more particularly Lady Ascot, were in a softened and forgiving mood. For, before any one had resumed the conversation, Lord Ascot's valet stood in the door, and, looking at Lady Ascot with a face which said as plain as words, "It is a terrible business, my lady, but I am innocent," announced—

"Lady Welter."

Lord Saltire put his snuff-box into his right-hand trousers' pocket, and his pocket handkerchief into his left, and

<sup>1</sup> Once for all, let me call every honest reader to witness, that, unless I speak in the first person, I am not bound to the opinions of any one of the characters in this book. I have merely made people speak as I think they would have spoken. Even in a story, consisting so entirely of incident as this, I feel it necessary to say so much, for no kind of unfairness is so common as that of identifying the opinions of a story-teller with those of his *dramatis personae*.

kept his hands there, leaning back in his chair, with his legs stretched out, and a smile of infinite wicked amusement on his face. Lord Ascot and William stared like a couple of gabies. Lady Ascot had no time to make the slightest change, either in feature or position, before Adelaide, dressed for the evening in a cloud of white and pink, with her bare arms loaded with bracelets, a swansdown fan hanging from her left wrist, sailed swiftly into the room, with outstretched hands, bore down on Lady Ascot, and began kissing her, as though the old lady were a fruit of some sort, and she were a dove pecking at it.

"Dearest grandma!"—peck. "So glad to see you!"—peck. "Couldn't help calling in on you as I went to Lady Brittlejug's—and how well you are looking!"—peck, peck. "I can spare ten minutes—do tell me all the news, since I saw you. My dear Lord Ascot, I was so sorry to hear of your illness, but you look better than I expected. And how do *you* do, my dear Lord Saltire?"

Lord Saltire was pretty well, and was delighted to see Lady Welter apparently in the enjoyment of such health and spirits, and so on, aloud. But, secretly, Lord Saltire was wondering what on earth could have brought her here. Perhaps she only wanted to take Lady Ascot by surprise, and force her into a recognition of her as Lady Welter. No, my lord saw there was something more than that. She was restless and absent with Lady Ascot. Her eye kept wandering, in the middle of all her rattling talk; but, wherever it wandered, it always came back to William, of whom she had hitherto taken no notice whatever.

"She has come after him. For what?" thought my lord. "I wonder if the jaded knows anything of Charles."

Lady Ascot had steeled herself against this meeting. She had determined, firstly, that no mortal power should ever induce her to set eyes on Adelaide again; and, secondly, that she, Lady Ascot, would give her, Adelaide, a piece of her mind, which she should never forget to

her dying day. Adelaide's audacity had disposed of her first determination, and, as for the second, why, the piece of Lady Ascot's mind which was to be given to Adelaide was, somehow, not handy; but, instead of it, only silent tears, and withered, trembling fingers, which wandered lovingly over the beautiful young hand, and made the gaudy bracelets on the wrist click one against the other.

"What could I say, Brooks? what could I do," said Lady Ascot to her maid that night, "when I saw her ownself come back, with her own old way? I love the girl more than ever, Brooks, I believe. She beat me. She took me by surprise. I could not resist her. If she had proposed to put me in a wheelbarrow, and wheel me into the middle of that disgraceful, that detestable woman, Brittlejug's drawing-room, there and then, I should have let her do it, I believe. I might have begged for time to put on my bonnet; but I should have gone."

She sat there ten minutes or more, talking. Then she said that it was time to go, but that she should come and see Lady Ascot on the morrow. Then she turned to William, to whom she had not been introduced, and asked, would he see her to her carriage? Lord Saltire was next the bell, and, looking her steadily in the face, raised his hand slowly to pull it. Adelaide begged him eagerly not to trouble himself; his lordship, with a smile, promptly dropped his hand, and out she sailed on William's arm, Lord Saltire holding the door open, and shutting it after her, with somewhat singular rapidity.

"I hope none of those fools of servants will come blundering upstairs before she has said her say," he remarked aloud. "Give us some of your South African experiences, Mr. Smith. Did you ever see a woman beautiful enough to go clip a lion's claws single-handed, eh?"

William, conveying Adelaide downstairs, had got no further than the first step, when he felt her hand drawn from his arm; he had got one foot on the step below, when he turned to see the

cause of this. Adelaide was standing on the step above him, with her glorious face bent sternly, almost fiercely, down on his, and the hand from which the fan hung pointed towards him. It was as beautiful a sight as he had ever seen, and he calmly wondered what it meant. The perfect mouth was curved in scorn, and from it came sharp ringing words, decisive, hard, clear, like the sound of a hammer on an anvil.

"Are you a party to this shameful business, sir? you, who have taken his name, and his place, and his prospects in society. You, who professed, as I hear, to love him like another life, dearer than your own. You, who lay on the same breast with him—tell me, in God's name, that you are sinning in ignorance."

William, as I have remarked before, had a certain amount of shrewdness. He determined to let her run on. He only said, "You are speaking of Charles Ravenshoe."

"Ay," she said, sharply; "of Charles Ravenshoe, sir—ex-stable-boy. I came here to-night to beard them all; to ask them, did they know, and did they dare to suffer it. If they had not given me an answer, I would have said such things to them as would have made them stop their ears. Lord Saltire has a biting tongue, has he? Let him see what mine is. But, when I saw you among them, I determined to save a scene, and speak to you alone. Shameful—"

William looked quietly at her. "Will your ladyship remark that I, that all of us, have been moving heaven and earth to find Charles Ravenshoe, and that we have been utterly unable to find him? If you have any information about him, would it not be as well to consider that the desperation caused by your treatment of him was the principal cause of his extraordinary resolution of hiding himself? And, instead of scolding me and others, who are doing all we can, to give us all the information in your power?"

"Well, well," she said, "perhaps you are right. Consider me rebuked, will

you have the goodness? I saw Charles Ravenshoe to-day."

"To-day!"

"Ay, and talked to him."

"How did he look? was he pale? was he thin? Did he seem to want money? Did he ask after me? Did he send any message? Can you take me to where he is? Did he seem much broken down? Does he know we have been seeking him? Lady Welter, for God's sake, do something to repair the wrong you did him, and take me to where he is."

"I don't know where he is, I tell you. I saw him for just one moment. He picked up my hat in the Park. He was dressed like a groom. He came from I know not where, like a ghost from the grave. He did not speak to me. He gave me my hat, and was gone. I do not know whose groom he is, but I think Welter knows. He will tell me to-night. I dared not ask him to-day, lest he should think I was going to see him. When I tell him where I have been, and describe what has passed here, he will tell me. Come to me to-morrow morning, and he shall tell you; that will be better. You have sense enough to see why."

"I see."

"Another thing. He has seen his sister Ellen. And yet another thing. When I ran away with Lord Welter, I had no idea of what had happened to him—of this miserable *esclandre*. But you must have known that before, if you were inclined to do me justice. Come to-morrow morning. I must go now."

And so she went to her carriage by herself after all. And William stood still on the stairs, triumphant. Charles was as good as found.

The two clergymen passed him on their way downstairs, and bade him good-night. Then he returned to the drawing-room, and said,—

"My lord, Lady Welter has seen Charles to-day, and spoken to him. With God's help, I will have him here with us to-morrow night."

It was half-past eleven. What

Charles, in his headlong folly and stupidity, had contrived to do before this time, must be told in another chapter—no, I have not patience to wait. My patience is exhausted. One act of folly following another so fast would exhaust the patience of Job. If one did not love him so well, one would not be so angry with him. I will tell it here and have done with it. When he had left Adelaide, he had gone home with Hornby. He had taken the horses to the stable; he had written a note to Hornby. Then he had packed up a bundle of clothes, and walked quietly off.

Round by St. Peter's Church—he had no particular reason for going there, except, perhaps, that his poor foolish heart yearned that evening to see some one who cared for him, though it were only a shoeblack. There was still one pair of eyes which would throw a light for one instant into the thick darkness which was gathering fast around him.

His little friend was there. Charles and he talked for a while, and at last he said—

"You will not see me again. I am going to the war. I am going to Wind-  
sor to enlist in the Dragoons to-night."

"They will kill you," said the boy.

"Most likely," said Charles. "So we must say good-bye. Mind, now, you go to the school at night, and say that prayer I gave you on the paper. We must say good-bye. We had better be quick about it."

The boy looked at him steadily. Then he began to draw his breath in long sighs—longer, longer yet, till his chest seemed bursting. Then out it all came in a furious hurricane of tears, and he leant his head against the wall, and beat the bricks with his clenched hand.

"And I am never to see you no more! no more! no more!"

"No more," said Charles. But he thought he might soften the poor boy's grief; and he did think, too, at the moment, that he would go and see the house where his kind old aunt lived, before he went away for ever; so he said,—

"I shall be in South Audley Street, 167, to-morrow at noon. Now, you must not cry, my dear. You must say good-bye."

And so he left him, thinking to see him no more. Once more, Charles, only once more, and then God help you!

He went off that night to Windsor, and enlisted in the 140th Dragoons.

## CHAPTER XLV.

### HALF A MILLION.

AND so you see here we are all at sixes and sevens once more. Apparently as near the end of the story, as when I wrote the adventures of Alured Ravenshoe at the court of Henry the Eighth in the very first chapter. If Charles had had a little of that worthy's impudence, instead of being the shy, sensitive fellow he was, why, the story would have been over long ago. In point of fact, I don't know that it would ever have been written at all. So it is best as it is for all parties.

Although Charles had enlisted in Hornby's own regiment, he had craftily calculated that there was not the slightest chance of Hornby's finding it out for some time. Hornby's troop was at the Regent's Park. The head-quarters were at Windsor, and the only officer likely to recognise him was Hornby's captain. And so he went to work at his new duties with an easy mind, rather amused than otherwise, and wondering where and when it would all end.

From sheer unadulterated ignorance, I cannot follow him during the first week or so of his career. I have a suspicion, almost amounting to certainty, that, if I could, I should not. I do not believe that the readers of Ravenshoe would care to hear about sword-exercise, riding-school, stable-guard, and so on. I can, however, tell you thus much, that Charles learnt his duties in a wonderfully short space of time, and was a great favourite with high and low.

When William went to see Adelaide by appointment the morning after his interview with her, he had an interview with Lord Welter, who told him, in answer to his inquiries, that Charles was groom to Lieutenant Hornby.

"I promised that I would say nothing about it," he continued; "but I think I ought: and Lady Welter has been persuading me to do so, if any inquiries were made, only this morning. I am deuced glad, Ravenshoe, that none of you have forgotten him. It would be a great shame if you had. He is a good fellow, and has been infernally used by some of us—by me, for instance."

William, in his gladness, said, "Never mind, my lord; let bygones be bygones. We shall all be to one another as we were before, please God. I have found Charles, at all events; so there is no gap in the old circle, except my father's. I had a message for Lady Welter."

"She is not down; she is really not well this morning, or she could have seen you."

"It is only this. Lady Ascot begs that she will come over to lunch. My aunt wished she would have stopped longer last night."

"Your aunt?"

"My aunt, Lady Ascot."

"Ah! I beg pardon; I am not quite used to the new state of affairs. Was Lady Welter with Lady Ascot last night?"

William was obliged to say yes, but felt as if he had committed an indiscretion by having said anything about it.

"The deuce she was!" said Lord Welter. "I thought she was somewhere else. Tell my father that I will come and see him to-day, if he don't think it would be too much for him."

"Ah, Lord Welter! you would have come before, if you had known—"

"I know, I know. You must know that I had my reasons for not coming. Well, I hope that you and I will be better acquainted in our new positions; we were intimate enough in our old."

When William was gone, Lord Wel-

ter went up to his wife's dressing-room, and said,—

"Lady Welter, you are a jewel. If you go on like this, you will be recognised, and we shall die at Ranford—you and I—a rich and respectable couple. If 'ifs and ands were pots and pans,' Lady Welter, we should do surprisingly well. If, for instance, Lord Saltire could be got to like me something better than a mad dog, he would leave my father the whole of his landed estate, and cut Charles Horton, whilom Ravenshoe, off with the comparatively insignificant sum of eighty thousand pounds, the amount of his funded property. Eh! Lady Welter."

Adelaide actually bounded from her chair.

"Are you drunk, Welter?" she said.

"Seeing that it is but the third hour of the day, I am not, Lady Welter. Neither am I a fool. Lord Saltire would clear my father now, if he did not know that it would be more for my benefit than his. I believe he would sooner leave his money to a hospital than see me get one farthing of it."

"Welter," said Adelaide, eagerly, "if Charles gets hold of Lord Saltire again, he will have the whole; the old man adores him. I know it; I see it all now; why did I never think of it before? He thinks he is like Lord Barkham, his son. There is time yet. If that man, William Ravenshoe, comes this morning, you must know nothing of Charles. Mind that. Nothing. They must not meet. He may forget him. Mind, Welter, no answer!"

She was walking up and down the room rapidly now, and Welter was looking at her with a satirical smile on his face.

"Lady Welter," he said, "the man, William Ravenshoe, has been here, and has got his answer. By this time, Charles is receiving his lordship's blessing."

"Fool!" was all that Adelaide could say.

"Well, hardly that," said Lord Welter. "At least, *you* should hardly call me so. I understood the position

of affairs long before you. I was a reckless young cub not to have paid Lord Saltire more court in old times; but I never knew the state of our affairs till very shortly before the crash came, or I might have done so. In the present case, I have not been such a fool. Charles is restored to Lord Saltire through my instrumentality. A very good basis of operations, Lady Welter."

"At a risk of about half a million of money," remarked Adelaide.

"There was no risk in the other course, certainly," said Lord Welter, "for we should never have seen a farthing of it. And besides, Lady Welter"—

"Well?"

"I have your attention. Good. It may seem strange to you, who care about no one in heaven or earth, but I love this fellow, this Charles Horton. I always did. He is worth all the men I ever met put together. I am glad to have been able to give him a lift this morning. Even if I had not been helping myself, I should have done it all the same. That is comical, is it not? For Lord Saltire's landed property I shall fight. The campaign begins at lunch to-day, Lady Welter; so, if you will be so good as to put on your full war-paint and feathers, we will dig up the tomahawk, and be off on the war-trail in your ladyship's brougham. Good-bye for the present."

Adelaide was beaten. She was getting afraid of her husband; afraid of his strong masculine cunning, of his reckless courage, and of the strange apparition of a great brutal heart at the bottom of it all. What were all her fine-spun female cobwebs worth against such a huge, blundering, thieving, hornet as he?

## CHAPTER XLVI.

### TO LUNCH WITH LORD ASCOT.

THAT same day, Lord Saltire and Lady Ascot were sitting in the drawing-room window, in South Audley Street, alone. He had come in as his custom was, about eleven, and found her reading her

great old Bible ; he had taken up the paper and read away for a time, saying that he would not interrupt her ; she, too, had seemed glad to avoid a *tête-à-tête* conversation, and had continued ; but, after a few minutes, he had dropped the paper, and cried,—

"The deuce !"

"My dear James," said she, "what is the matter?"

"Matter! why, we have lost a war-steamer, almost without a shot fired. The Russians have got the *Tiger*, crew and all. It is unbearable, Maria; if they are going to blunder like this at the beginning, where will it end?"

Lord Saltire was disgusted with the war from the very beginning, in consequence of the French alliance, and so the present accident was as fuel for his wrath. Lady Ascot, as loyal a soul as lived, was possibly rather glad that something had taken up Lord Saltire's attention just then, for she was rather afraid of him this morning. She knew his great dislike for Lord Welter, and expected to be scolded for her weakness with regard to Adelaide the night before. Moreover, she had the guilty consciousness that she had asked Adelaide to come to lunch that morning, of which he did not yet know. So she was rather glad to have a subject to talk of, not personal.

"And when did it happen, my dear James?" she asked.

"On the twelfth of last month, Lady Ascot. Come and sit here in the window, and give an account of yourself, will you have the goodness?"

Now that she saw it must come, she was as cool and as careless as need be. He could not be hard on her. Charles was to come home to them that day! She drew her chair up, and laid her withered old hand on his, and the two grey heads were bent together. Grey heads but green hearts!

"Look at old Daventry," said Lord Saltire, "on the other side of the way. Don't you see him, Maria, listening to that organ? He is two years older than I am. He looks younger."

"I don't know that he does. He

ought to look older. She led him a terrible life. Have you been to see him lately?"

"What business is that of yours? So you are going to take Welter's wife back into your good graces, eh, my lady?"

"Yes, James."

"Yes, James!"—I have no patience with you. You are weaker than water. Well, well, we must forgive her, I suppose. She has behaved generously enough about Charles, has she not? I rather admire her scolding poor William Ravenshoe. I must renew our acquaintance."

"She is coming to lunch to-day."

"I thought you looked guilty. Is Welter coming?"

Lady Ascot made no reply. Neither at that moment would Lord Saltire have heard her if she had. He was totally absorbed in the proceedings of his old friend Lord Daventry, before mentioned. That venerable dandy had listened to the organ until the man had played all his tunes twice through, when he had given him half-a-crown, and the man had departed. Immediately afterwards, a Punch and Judy had come, which Punch and Judy was evidently an acquaintance of his; for, on desecrating him, it had hurried on with its attendant crowd, and breathlessly pitched itself in front of him, let down its green curtains, and plunged at once in *medias res*. The back of the show was towards Lord Saltire; but, just as he saw Punch look round the corner, to see which way the Devil was gone, he saw two pick-pockets advance on Lord Daventry from different quarters, with fell intentions. They met at his tail-coat pocket, quarrelled, and fought. A policeman bore down on them; Lord Daventry was still unconscious, staring his eyes out of his head. The affair was becoming exciting, when Lord Saltire felt a warm tear drop on his hand.

"James," said Lady Ascot, "don't be hard on Welter. I love Welter. There is good in him; there is, indeed. I know how shamefully he has behaved; but don't be hard on him, James."



"My dearest Maria," said Lord Saltire, "I would not give you one moment's uneasiness for the world. I do not like Welter. I dislike him. But I will treat him for your sake and Ascot's as though I loved him—there. Now about Charles. He will be with us to-day, thank God. What the deuce are we to do?"

"I cannot conceive," said Lady Ascot; "it is such a terrible puzzle. One does not like to move, and yet it seems such a sin to stand still."

"No answer to your advertisement, of course?" said Lord Saltire.

"None whatever. It seems strange, too, with such a reward as we have offered; but it was worded so cautiously, you see."

Lord Saltire laughed. "Cautiously, indeed. No one could possibly guess what it was about. It was a miracle of obscurity; but it won't do to go any further yet." After a pause, he said,— "You are perfectly certain of your facts, Maria, for the fiftieth time."

"Perfectly certain. I committed a great crime, James. I did it for Alicia's sake. Think what my bringing up had been, how young I was, and forgive me if you can; excuse me you cannot."

"Nonsense about a great crime, Maria. It was a great mistake, certainly. If you had only had the courage to have asked Petre one simple question! Alicia never guessed the fact, of course?"

"Never."

"Do you think, Maria, that by any wild possibility James or Norah knew?"

"How could they possibly? What a foolish question."

"I don't know. Those Roman Catholics do strange things," said Lord Saltire, staring out of window at the crowd.

"If she knew, why did she change the child?"

"Eh?" said Lord Saltire, turning round.

"You have not been attending," said Lady Ascot.

"No, I have not," said Lord Saltire; "I was looking at Daventry."

"Do you still," said Lord Saltire, "since all our researches and failures,  
No. 27.—VOL. V.

stick to the belief that the place was in Hampshire?"

"I do indeed, and in the north of Hampshire too."

"I wonder," said Lord Saltire, turning round suddenly, "whether Mackworth knows?"

"Of course he does," said Lady Ascot, quietly.

"Hum," said Lord Saltire, "I had a hold over that man once; but I threw it away as being worthless. I wish I had made a bargain for my information. But what nonsense; how can he know?"

"Know?" said Lady Ascot, scornfully; "what is there a confessor don't know? Don't tell me that all Mackworth's power came from finding out poor Densil's *faux pas*. The man had a sense of power other than that."

"Then he never used it," said Lord Saltire. "Densil, dear soul, never knew."

"I said a *sense* of power," said Lady Ascot, "which gave him his consummate impudence. Densil never dreamt of it."

At this point the policeman had succeeded in capturing the two pickpockets, and was charging them before Lord Daventry. Lord Daventry audibly offered them ten shillings a-piece to say nothing about it; at which the crowd cheered.

"Would it be any use to offer money to the priest—say ten thousand pounds or so?" said Lord Saltire. "You are a religious woman, Maria, and as such are a better judge of a priest's conscience than I. What do you think?"

"I don't know," said Lady Ascot. "I don't know but what the man is high-minded, in his heathenish way. You know Cuthbert's story of his having refused ten thousand pounds to hush up the matter about Charles. His information would be a blow to the Popish Church in the West. He would lose position by accepting your offer. I don't know what his position may be worth. You can try him, if all else fails; not otherwise, I should say. We must have a closer search."

"When you come to think, Maria,

he can't know. If Densil did not know, how could he?"

"Old Clifford might have known, and told him."

"If we are successful, and if Adelaide has no children—two improbable things—" said Lord Saltire, "why, then,—"

"Why, then,—" said Lady Ascot. "But at the worst you are going to make Charles a rich man. Shall you tell William?"

"Not yet. Cuthbert should never be told, I say; but that is Charles's business. I have prepared William."

"Cuthbert will not live," said Lady Ascot.

"Not a chance of it, I believe. Marston says his heart-complaint does not exist, but I think differently."

At this moment, Lord Daventry's offer of money having been refused, the whole crowd moved off in procession towards the police-station. First came three little girls with big bonnets and babies, who, trying to do two things at once—to wit, head the procession by superior speed, and at the same time look round at Lord Daventry and the pickpockets—succeeded in neither, but only brought the three babies' heads in violent collision every other step. Next came Lord Daventry, resigned. Next the policeman, with a pickpocket in each hand, giving explanations. Next the boys; after them, the Punch and Judy, which had unfortunately seen the attempt made, and must to the station as a witness, to the detriment of business. Bringing up the rear were the British public, who played practical jokes with one another. The dogs kept a parallel course in the gutter, and barked. In turning the first corner, the procession was cut into, and for a time thrown into confusion, by a light-hearted costermonger, who, returning from a successful market with an empty barrow, drove it in among them with considerable velocity. After which, they disappeared like the baseless fabric of a dream, only to be heard of again in the police reports.

"Lord and Lady Welter."

Lord Saltire had seen them drive up to the door; so he was quite prepared. He had been laughing intensely, but quite silently. At poor Lord Daventry's adventures, and so, when he turned round he had a smile on his face. Adelaide had done kissing Lady Ascot, and was still holding both her hands with a look of intense mournful affection. Lord Saltire was so much amused by Adelaide's acting, and by her simplicity in performing before himself, that, when he advanced to Lord Welter, he was perfectly radiant.

"Well, my dear scapegrace, and how do you do?" he said, giving his hand to Lord Welter; "a more ill-mannered fellow I never saw in my life. To go away and hide yourself with that lovely young wife of yours, and leave all us oldsters to bore one another to death. What the deuce do you mean by it? Eh, sir?"

Lord Welter did not reply in the same strain. He said—

"It is very kind of you to receive me like this. I did not expect it. Allow me to tell you, that I think your manner towards me would not be quite so cordial if you knew everything; there is a great deal that you don't know, and which I don't mean to tell you."

It is sometimes quite impossible, even for a writer of fiction, a man with *carte blanche* in the way of invention, to give the cause for a man's actions. I have thought and thought, and I cannot for the life of me tell you why Lord Welter answered Lord Saltire like that, whether it was deep cunning or merely recklessness. If it was cunning, it was cunning of a high order. It was genius. The mixture of respect and kindness towards the person, and of carelessness about his favour was—well—very creditable. Lord Saltire did not think he was acting, and his opinion is of some value, I believe. But then, we must remember that he was prepared to think the best of Lord Welter that day, and must make allowances. I am not prepared with an opinion; let every man form his own. I only know that Lord Saltire tapped his teeth with his snuff-box and remained silent. Lord

Welter, whether consciously or no, was nearer the half of a million of money than he had ever been before.

But Adelaide's finer sense was offended at her husband's method of proceeding. For one instant, when she heard him say what he did, she could have killed him. "Reckless, brutal, selfish," she said fiercely to herself, "throwing a duke's fortune to the winds by sheer obstinacy." (At this time she had picked up Lady Ascot's spectacles, and was playfully placing them on her venerable nose.) "I wish I had never seen him. He is maddening. If he only had some brains, where might not we be?" But the conversation of that morning came to her mind with a jar, and the suspicion with it, that he had more brains of a sort than she; that, though they were on a par in morality, there was a strength about him, against which her finesse was worthless. She knew she could never deceive Lord Saltire, and there was Lord Saltire tapping him on the knee with his snuff-box, and talking earnestly and confidentially to him. She was beginning to respect her husband. He dared face that terrible old man with his hundreds of thousands; she trembled in his presence!

Let us leave her, fooling our dear old friend to the top of her bent, and hear what the men were saying.

"I know you have been, as they say now, 'very fast,'" said Lord Saltire, drawing nearer to him. "I don't want to ask any questions which don't concern me. You have sense enough to know that it is worth your while to stand well with me. Will you answer me a few questions which do concern me?"

"I can make no promises, Lord Saltire. Let me hear what they are, will you?"

"Why," said Lord Saltire, "about Charles Ravenshoe."

"About Charles!" said Lord Welter, looking up at Lord Saltire. "Oh, yes; any number. I have nothing to conceal there. Of course you will know everything. I had sooner you knew it from me than another."

"I don't mean about Adelaide; let that go by. Perhaps I am glad that that is as it is. But have you known where Charles was lately? Your wife told William to come to her this morning; that is why, I ask."

"I have known a very short time. When William Ravenshoe came this morning, I gave him every information. Charles will be with you to-day."

"I am satisfied."

"I don't care to justify myself, but if it had not been for me you would never have seen him. And more. I am not the first man, Lord Saltire, who has done what I have done."

"No, of course not," said Lord Saltire. "I can't fling the first stone at you; God forgive me."

"But you must see, Lord Saltire, that I could not have guessed that Ellen was his sister."

"Hey?" said Lord Saltire. "Say that again."

"I say that, when I took Ellen Horton away from Ravenshoe, I did not know that she was Charles's sister."

Lord Saltire fell back in his chair, and said—

"Good God!"

"It is very terrible, looked at one way, Lord Saltire. If you come to look at it another, it amounts to this, that she was only, as far as I knew, a game-keeper's daughter. Do you remember what you said to Charles and me, when we were rusticated?"

"Yes. I said that one vice was considered more venial than another vice now-a-days; and I say so still. I had sooner that you had died of delirium tremens in a ditch than done this."

"So had not I, Lord Saltire. When I became involved with Adelaide, I thought she was provided for; I, even then, had not heard this *esclandre* about Charles. She refused a splendid offer of marriage before she left me."

"We thought she was dead. Where is she gone?"

"I have no idea. She refused everything. She staid on as Adelaide's maid, and left us suddenly. We have lost all trace of her."

"What a miserable, dreadful business!" said Lord Saltire.

"Very so," said Lord Welter. "Hadn't we better change the subject, my lord?" he added drily. "I am not at all sure that I shall submit to much more cross-questioning. You must not push me too far, or I shall get savage."

"I won't," said Lord Saltire. "But, Welter, for God's sake, answer me two more questions. Not offensive ones, on my honour."

"Fifty, if you will; only consider my rascally temper."

"Yes, yes! When Ellen was with you, did she ever hint that she was in possession of any information about the Ravenshoes?"

"Yes; or rather, when she went, she left a letter, and in it she said that she had something to tell Charles."

"Good, good!" said Lord Saltire. "She may know. We must find her. Now, Charles is coming here to-day. Had you better meet him, Welter?"

"We have met before. All that is past is forgiven between us."

"Met!" said Lord Saltire eagerly. "And what did he say to you? Was there a scene, Welter?"

Lord Welter paused before he answered, and Lord Saltire, the wise, looked out of window. Once Lord Welter seemed going to speak, but there was a catch in his breath. The second attempt was more fortunate. He said, in a low voice—

"Why, I'll tell you, my lord. Charles Ravenshoe is broken-hearted."

"Lord and Lady Hainault."

And Miss Corby, and Gus, and Flora, and Archy, the footman might have added, but was probably afraid of spoiling his period.

It was rather awkward. They were totally unexpected, and Lord Hainault and Lord Welter had not met since Lord Hainault had denounced Lord Welter at Tattersall's. It was so terribly awkward that Lord Saltire recovered his spirits, and looked at the two young men with a smile. The young men disappointed him, however, for Lord Hainault said, "How d'ye do, Welter?"

and Lord Welter said, "How do, Hainault?" and the matter was settled, at all events for the present.

When all salutations had been exchanged among the ladies, and Archy had hoisted himself up into Mary's lap, and Lady Hainault had imperially settled herself in a chair, with Flora at her knee, exactly opposite Adelaide, there was a silence for a moment, during which it became apparent that Gus had a question to ask of Lady Ascot. Mary trembled, but the others were not quite sorry to have the silence broken. Gus, having obtained leave of the house, wished to know, whether or not Satan, should he repent of his sins, would have a chance of regaining his former position?

"That silly Scotch nursemaid has been reading Burns's poems to him, I suppose," said Lady Hainault; "unless Mary herself has been doing so. Mary prefers anything to Watts's hymns, Lady Ascot."

"You must not believe one word Lady Hainault says, Lady Ascot," said Mary. "She has been shamefully worsted in an argument, and she is resorting to all sorts of unfair means to turn the scales. I never read a word of Burns's poems in my life."

"You will be pleased not to believe a single word Miss Corby says, Lady Ascot," said Lady Hainault. "She has convicted herself. She sings 'The banks and braes of bonny Doon'—very badly, I will allow, but still she sings it."

There was a laugh at this. Anything was better than the silence which had gone before. It became evident that Lady Hainault would not speak to Adelaide. It was very uncomfortable. Dear Mary would have got up another friendly passage of arms with Lady Hainault, but she was too nervous. She would have even drawn out Gus, but she saw that Gus, dear fellow, was not in a humour to be trusted that morning. He evidently was aware that the dogs of war were loose, and was champing the bit like a war-horse. Lady Ascot was as nervous as Mary, dying

to say something, but unable. Lady Hainault was calmly inexorable, Adelaide sublimely indifferent. If you will also consider that Lady Ascot was awaiting news of Charles—nay, possibly Charles himself—and that, in asking Adelaide to lunch, she had overlooked the probability that William would bring him back with him—that Welter had come without invitation, and that the Hainaults were totally unexpected—you will think that the dear old lady was in about as uncomfortable a position as she could be, and that any event, even the house catching fire, must change matters for the better.

Not at all. They say that, when things come to the worst, they must mend. That is undeniable. But when are they at the worst? Who can tell that? Lady Ascot thought they were at the worst now, and was taking comfort. And then the footman threw open the door, and announced—

"Lady Hainault and Miss Hicks."

At this point Lady Ascot lost her temper, and exclaimed aloud, "This is too much!" They thought old Lady Hainault did not hear her; but she did, and so did Hicks. They heard it fast enough, and remembered it too.

In great social catastrophes, minor differences are forgotten. In the Indian mutiny, people spoke to one another, and made friends, who were at bitterest variance before. There are crises so terrible that people of all creeds and shades of political opinion must combine against a common enemy. This was one. When this dreadful old woman made her totally unexpected entrance, and when Lady Ascot showed herself so entirely without discretion as to exclaim aloud in the way she did, Lady Hainault and Adelaide were so horrified, so suddenly quickened to a sense of impending danger, that they began talking loudly and somewhat affectionately to one another. And Lady Hainault, whose self-possession was scattered to the four winds by this last misfortune, began asking Adelaide all about Lady Brittlejug's

drum, in full hearing of her mamma-in-law, who treasured up every word she said. And, just as she became conscious of saying wildly that she was so sorry she could not have been there—as if Lady Brittlejug would ever have had the impudence to ask her—she saw Lord Saltire, across the room, looking quietly at her, with the expression on his face of one of the idols at Abou Simbel.

Turn Lady Ascot once fairly to bay, you would (if you can forgive slang) get very little change out of her. She came of valiant blood. No Headstall was ever yet known to refuse his fence. Even her poor brother, showing as he did traces of worn-out blood (the men always go a generation or two before the women), had been a desperate rider, offered to kick Fouquier Tinville at his trial, and had kept Simon waiting on the guillotine while he pared his nails. Her ladyship rose and accepted battle; she advanced towards old Lady Hainault, and, leaning on her crutched stick, began—

"And how do you do, my dear Lady Hainault?"

She thought Lady Hainault would say something very disagreeable, as she usually did. She looked at her, and was surprised to see how altered she was. There was something about her looks that Lady Ascot did not like.

"My dear Lady Ascot," said old Lady Hainault, "I thank you. I am a very old woman. I never forget my friends, I assure you. Hicks, is Lord Hainault here?—I am very blind, you will be glad to hear, Lady Ascot. Hicks, I want Lord Hainault instantly. Fetch him to me, you stupid woman. Hainault! Hainault!"

Our Lady Hainault rose suddenly, and put her arm round her waist. "Mamma," she said, "what do you want?"

"I want Hainault, you foolish girl. Is that him? Hainault, I have made the will, my dear boy. The rogue came to me, and I told him that the will was made, and that Britten and Sloane had witnessed it. Did I do

right or not, eh? Ha! Ha! I followed you here to tell you. Don't let that woman Ascot insult me, Hainault. She has committed a felony, that woman. I'll have her prosecuted. And all to get that chit Alicia married to that pale-faced papist, Petre Ravenshoe. She thinks I didn't know it, does she? I knew she knew it well enough, and I knew it too, and I have committed a felony too, in holding my tongue, and we'll both go to Bridewell, and—"

Lord Saltire here came up and quietly offered her his arm. She took it and departed, muttering to herself.

I must mention here that the circumstance mentioned by old Lady Hainault, of having made a will, has nothing to do with the story. A will had existed to the detriment of Lady Hainault and Miss Hicks, and she had most honourably made another in their favour.

Lady Ascot would have given worlds to unsay many things she had heretofore said to her. It was evident that poor old Lady Hainault's mind was failing. Lady Ascot would have prayed her forgiveness on her knees, but it was too late. Lady Hainault never appeared in public again. She died a short time after this, and, as I mentioned before, left poor Miss Hicks a rich woman. Very few people knew how much good there was in the poor old soul. Let the Custerton tenantry testify.

On this occasion her appearance had, as we have seen, the effect of reconciling Lady Hainault and Adelaide. A very few minutes after her departure William entered the room, followed by Hornby, whom none of them had ever seen before.

They saw from William's face that something fresh was the matter. He introduced Hornby, who seemed concerned, and then gave an open note to Lord Saltire. He read it over, and then said,

"This unhappy boy has disappeared again. Apparently his interview with you determined him, my dear Lady Welter. Can you give us any clue? This is his letter:—"

"DEAR LIEUTENANT,—I must say good-bye even to you, my last friend. I was recognized in your service to-day by Lady Welter, and it will not do for me to stay in it any longer. It was a piece of madness ever taking to such a line of life."

[Here there were three lines carefully erased. Lord Saltire mentioned it, and Hornby quietly said, "I erased those lines previous to showing the letter to any one; they referred to exceedingly private matters." Lord Saltire bowed, and continued,]

"A hundred thanks for your kindness; you have been to me more like a brother than a master. We shall meet again, when you little expect it. Pray don't assist in any search after me; it will be quite useless.

"CHARLES HORTON."

Adelaide came forward as pale as death. "I believe I am the cause of this. I did not dream it would have made him alter his resolution so suddenly. When I saw him this morning he was in a groom's livery. I told him he was disgracing himself, and told him, if he was desperate, to go to the war."

They looked at one another in silence.

"Then," Lady Ascot said, "he has enlisted, I suppose. I wonder in what regiment?—could it be in yours, Mr. Hornby?"

"The very last in which he would, I should say," said Hornby, "if he wants to conceal himself. He must know that I should find him at once."

So Lady Ascot was greatly pooh-poohed by the other wiseacres, she being right all the time.

"I think," said Lord Saltire to Lady Ascot, "that perhaps we had better take Mr. Hornby into our confidence." She agreed, and, after the Hainaults and Welters were gone, Hornby remained behind with them, and heard things which rather surprised him.

"Enquiries at the depôts of various regiments would be as good a plan as any. Meanwhile I will give any assistance in my power. Pray, would it not be a good plan to advertise for him,



and state all the circumstances of the case?"

"Why, no," said Lord Saltire, "we do not wish to make known all the circumstances yet. Other interests have to be consulted, and our information is not yet complete. Complete! we have nothing to go on but mere surmise."

"You will think me inquisitive," said Hornby. "But you little know what a right (I had almost said) I have to ask these questions. Does the present Mr. Ravenshoe know of all this?"

"Not one word."

And so Hornby departed with William, and said nothing at all about Ellen. As they left the door a little shoe-black looked inquisitively at them, and seemed as though he would speak. They did not notice the child. He could have told them what they wanted to know, but how were they to guess that?

Impossible. Actually, according to the sagacious Welter, eighty thousand pounds, and other things, going a begging, and a dirty little shoe-black the only human being who knew where the heir was! A pig is an obstinate animal, likewise a sheep; but what pig or sheep was ever so provoking in its obstinacy as Charles in his good-natured, well-meaning, blundering stupidity? In a very short time you will read an advertisement put into the *Times* by Lady Ascot's solicitor, which will show you the reason for some of the great anxiety which she and others felt to have him on the spot. At first Lady Ascot and Lord Saltire lamented his absence, from the hearty goodwill they bore him; but, as time wore on, they began to get deeply solicitous for his return for other reasons. Lady Ascot's hands were tied. She was in a quandary, and, when the intelligence came of his having enlisted, and there seemed nearly a certainty of his being shipped off to foreign parts, and killed before she could get at him, she was in a still greater quandary. Suppose, before being killed, he was to marry some one? "Good heavens, my dear James, was ever an unfortunate wretch punished so before for keeping a secret?"

"I should say not, Maria," said Lord Saltire coolly. "I declare I love the lad better the more trouble he gives one. There never was such a dear obstinate dog. Welter has been making his court, and has made it well—with an air of ruffian-like simplicity, which was charming, because novel. I, even I, can hardly tell whether it was real or not. He has ten times the brains of his shallow-pated little wife, whose manoeuvres, my dear Maria, I should have thought even you, not ordinarily a sagacious person, might have seen through."

"I believe the girl loves me; and don't be rude, James."

"I believe she don't care twopenny for you; and I shall be as rude as I please, Maria."

Poor Lord Ascot had a laugh at this little battle between his mother and her old friend. So Lord Saltire turned to him and said,

"At half-past one to-morrow morning, you will be awakened by three ruffians in crape masks, with pistols, who will take you out of bed with horrid threats, and walk you upstairs and down in your shirt, until you have placed all your money and valuables into their hands. They will effect an entrance by removing a pane of glass, and introducing a small boy, disguised as a shoeblack, who will give them admittance."

"Good Gad!" said Lord Ascot, "what are you talking about?"

"Don't you see that shoeblack over the way?" said Lord Saltire. "He has been watching the house through two hours; the burglars are going to put him in at the back kitchen window. There comes Daventry back from the police-station. I bet you a sovereign he has his boots cleaned."

Poor Lord Ascot jumped at the bet like an old war-horse. "I'd have given you three to one if you had waited."

Lord Daventry had indeed reappeared on the scene; his sole attendant was one of the little girls with a big bonnet and a baby, before mentioned, who had evidently followed him to the police station, watched him in, and then accompanied him home—staring at him,

as at a man of dark experiences, a man not to be lost sight of on any account, lest some new and exciting thing should befall him meanwhile. This young lady, having absented herself some two hours on this errand, and having thereby deprived the baby of its natural nourishment, was now suddenly encountered by an angry mother, and, knowing what she had to expect, was forced to "dodge" her infuriated parent round and round Lord Daventry, in a way which made that venerable nobleman giddy, and caused him to stop, shut his eyes, and feebly offer them money not to do it any more. Ultimately the young lady was caught and cuffed, the baby was refreshed, and his lordship free.

Lord Saltire won his pound, to his great delight. Such an event as a shoe-black in South Audley Street was not to be passed by. Lord Daventry entered into conversation with our little friend, asked him if he went to school? if he could say the Lord's Prayer? how much he made in the day? whether his parents were alive? and ultimately had his boots cleaned, and gave the boy half-a-crown. After which he disappeared from the scene, and, like many of our large staff of supernumeraries, from this history for evermore—he has served his turn with us. Let us dismiss the kind-hearted old dandy, with our best wishes.

Lord Saltire saw him give the boy the half-crown. He saw the boy pocket it as though it were a half-penny; and afterwards continue to watch the house, as before. He was more sure than ever that the boy meant no good. If he had known that he was waiting for one chance of seeing Charles again, perhaps he would have given him half-a-crown himself. What a difference one word from that boy would have made in our story!

When they came back from dinner, there was the boy still lying on the pavement, leaning against his box. The little girl who had had her ears boxed came and talked to him for a time, and went on. After a time she came back with a quartern loaf in her hand, the crumbs of which she picked as she went along, after the manner of children sent on an errand to the baker's. When she had gone by, he rose and leant against the railings, as though lingering, loth to go.

Once more, later, Lord Saltire looked out, and the boy was still there. "I wonder what the poor little rogue wants?" said Lord Saltire; "I have half a mind to go and ask him." But he did not. It was not to be, my lord. You might have been with Charles the next morning at Windsor. You might have been in time if you had; you will have a different sort of meeting with him than that, if you meet him at all. Beyond the grave, my lord, that meeting must be. Possibly a happier one, who knows? who dare say?

The summer night closed in, but the boy lingered yet, to see, if perchance he might, the only friend he ever had; to hear, if he might, the only voice which had ever spoken gently and kindly to him of higher things, the only voice which had told him that strange, wild tale, scarce believed as yet, of a glorious immortality.

The streets began to get empty. The people passed him—

"Ones and twos,  
And groups; the latest said the night  
grew chill,  
And hastened; but he loitered; whilst  
the dews  
Fell fast, he loitered still."

*To be continued.*

## BY TEMPLE BAR.

## A REVERIE.

Not now upon the silent Ings,  
 Alone with fancy's make-believe,  
 I watch the grey decline of things  
 That marks another New Year's Eve.

Steep curves of snow on either hand  
 Above the crashing river lean,  
 As once the hollow'd waves did stand  
 While marching myriads swept between.

But grinding ice and wreathen snow  
 And rushing stream are far away;  
 And that red sun, I know not now  
 If he hath set or shone to-day.

Alone I wait this solemn tide—  
 But not alone in vale or glen;  
 The good green earth on every side  
 Is choked with houses and with men.

Yet, the great heavens are always here:  
 Above the glimmer of the Thames  
 One sees their purple hemisphere  
 Still writ with old heraldic flares;

Still heaving, soaring, toward the noon  
 Of night, while we below sit mute,  
 And feel as in some vast balloon  
 Where all the earth is parachute.

And men, too, heed this closing time;  
 For toward me through the dark there swells,  
 In startled gusts, the trembling chime  
 And thick salute of midnight bells;

And clocks, as various as the creeds,  
 Strike discord from their windy walls,  
 Until to such weak rout succeeds  
 The deep decisive boom of Paul's.

*That* is the hour! along the floors  
 Of life it speaks the very din  
 And' thunder of the dungeon-doors  
 That shut another captive in.

And have we, then, no thrilling spasm,  
 No quick uplifting of the head,  
 While audibly this vital chasm  
 Yawns 'twixt the dying and the dead?

Not now. We once had hearts like yours—  
 Repeaters of the perfect round,  
 That throb'd in music through the hours,  
 Still, bell-like, stricken into sound

By all that ever came across  
 The order'd impulse of their ways;  
 By hope and joy, by grief and loss,  
 And by the placid-moving days:

But now, the candid face is hid,  
 The frank sweet tongue has ceased to move;  
 And daily devilries forbid  
 That homely household voice of love.

And well, that those true hands are still—  
 And well, that tongue has ceased to sway—  
 For all our morrows cannot fill  
 The place of one bright yesterday.

Ah, brother! we must look behind,  
 Toward that far land of make-believe—  
 Of keen and conscious youth—to find  
 The blessedness of New Year's Eve.

ARTHUR J. MUNBY.

#### ENGLISH SACRED POETRY IN THE EIGHTEENTH AND NINETEENTH CENTURIES.<sup>1</sup>

THE number at which the editions of Keble's "*Christian Year*" have now arrived bespeaks an amount of popularity which is no small achievement for the period of thirty-three years—one generation of human existence, according to the technical computation. So large an amount of devotional nourishment has been imbibed from this source, that, to no inconsiderable a portion of the religious world, the period when "*Keble*" was not, appears a kind of spiritual blank—we will not say quite such a blank as the early Reformers must have regarded the days when the Bible was a sealed book, but not without some analogy to that dreary retrospect. Where, we are led to ask, did High-Church sentiment find its appropriate poetical food before the "*Christian Year*" appeared? No doubt the faith

of Protestant England had had its bards. There was Milton, there was Cowper, there was Addison, there were the Methodist lyrists of the Calvinist and the Wesleyan persuasions. In later times there were the animating strains of Heber, and Milman, and Montgomery. All these were read and remembered up to the time when Keble wrote. But it was difficult for the severely orthodox mind to sympathize heartily with any of them. Milton was an Arian and a Republican. Cowper was a pronounced "Evangelical." Addison was lukewarm and latitudinarian. The Methodist hymn writers jarred on a Churchman's feelings at every turn. Heber and Milman were picturesque and spirited, and orthodox to boot; but their poetry was scarcely of the meditative cast that satisfies a devout Christian's hours of self-communion. None of these authors assuredly came up to the ideal of an

<sup>1</sup> *The Christian Year*, by John Keble. 65th Edition. 1860.

Anglican Church-poet, such as his affectionate admirers recognise in the author of the "Christian Year."

But we must remember, on the other hand, that, before the publication of "Keble," modern High-Churchism—high Anglicanism by its friends, Tractarianism by its foes—was not an established phase of human thought. The High-Churchism of the beginning of the present century was a different thing from what we are usually apt to associate with that term. It was an orthodox, self-satisfied, withal a somewhat prosaic persuasion. Its traditional sympathies with Jacobites and Non-jurors did not go the length of causing serious disaffection to the things that be. The alliance of Church and State—Church represented by prelates like Horsley and Lowth, State represented by a king like George the Third—was a first principle of its creed. Its congregational worship affected no revolutionary Rubricism; for congregational singing, Tate and Brady's version of the Psalms, once set forth by authority, was sufficient. Hymns and spiritual songs were perhaps not very much in vogue, either for Church or closet, with those who piqued themselves on being especially "high and dry;" but unsophisticated piety, of whatever persuasion, might and did find aliment in the strains of Cowper, or of Addison, or of Watts, or of other pious versifiers of more or less divergency from ecclesiastical requirements.

And here, preparatory to dealings with some elements in the formation of Keble's style, let us throw a glance over the history and principal features of English devotional poetry in the last and present century, and the influences which have modified the public taste, from time to time, in this department of our literature.

Addison's hymns were written at a time when certainly there was very little sensibility to sacred poetry apparent either in the higher or lower classes of society. The Puritanism, which in its heroic age had produced the sublime conceptions of Milton, had given place to a dull, disputatious Dissent. The feeble chants of the Nonjurors had died

away in the not unimpressive tones of Bishop Ken. The rising school of poetic composition was about to exhibit, in the essays of its greatest genius, Pope, a type of the unimpassioned philosophy which was its inspiration. Among the "good society" of that period, the "infidel" Bolingbroke, the "corrupt" Harley, and the "profligate Steele," were representatives of the fashionable principles too commonly afloat. It was a time, assuredly, when devotional tendencies, where they existed, were not brought prominently forward. A man of refinement had no inducement in the sympathy of his fellows, to employ his talents in recommending religious subjects; especially a man who as a statesman, philosopher, and wit, had no professional prepossession for such subjects. Yet, from the natural impulses of a pious heart, Addison produced a few simple effusions of sacred verse, which have always retained a place in the affections of his countrymen. There is no devotional zeal, no fervid spiritualism in these hymns; they are the utterance of a calm, but genial spirit, reposing in sure trust on the Providence of God, and rejoicing in His mercies. Nor were they the casual flights of a soul ordinarily absorbed in the pursuits of ambition or of pleasure. Like the beautiful meditations which infuse an under-current of religion through the pages of the *Spectator*, they arose from the habitual, though to the mere outward observer, imperceptible direction of his thoughts. For by the meditations of his inmost soul in life, not less than by his pious hope in death, to which he himself ventured the appeal, Addison gave evidence far better than that of many a formal treatise, of the faith which is the good man's one sustaining guide through a busy and an evil world.

But, if the fashionable world of Addison's time was disinclined for the cultivation of poetry as connected with religious subjects, if it afforded little attraction to the steady-going adherents of the Establishment, with the straiter sects addicted to Calvinist Nonconformity there was a positive objection to it, on the ground of the old

Puritan prejudices inveighed against by the republican poet, George Wither. They were still disposed to

"Misjudge of poetry, as if the same  
Did worthily deserve reproach or  
blame ;"

and, indeed, if the carnal learning and the ornaments of imagination displayed in Milton's verse had been too much for the rigid temper of his contemporaries, it was scarcely to be wondered at, that the succeeding generation should have held in increased suspicion an art that had been perverted to licentious uses by such writers as Dryden, Rochester, and Etherege.

But, as the excitement of great deeds had ceased to elevate the Puritanic cause, some there were who felt that the ore of poetic fancy might be worked to advantage in its behalf. It was the grave sectarian, Dr. Isaac Watts, who first, after the Restoration, ventured on system to invade the realm of Poetry, and conquer a province of it expressly for religious uses. He made his declaration of war in the following terms:—

"The profanation and debasement of  
"so Divine an art has tempted some  
"weaker Christians to imagine that  
"poetry and vice are naturally akin ;  
"or, at least, that verse is fit only to  
"recommend trifles, and entertain our  
"looser hours, but it is too light and  
"trivial a method to treat anything that  
"is serious and sacred. They submit,  
"indeed, to use it in Divine psalmody,  
"but they love the driest translation of  
"the psalm best. They will venture to  
"sing a dull hymn or two at church, in  
"tunes of equal dullness, but still they  
"persuade themselves and their children that the beauties of poetry are  
"vain and dangerous. All that arises  
"a degree above Mr. Sternhold is too  
"airy for worship, and hardly escapes  
"the sentence of 'unclean and abominable' . . . Shall the French poet  
"affright us by saying,

"*'De la foi d'un Chrétien les mystères terribles*

"*D'ornemens égayés ne sont point*  
susceptibles !"

"If the trifling, incredible tales that  
"furnish out a tragedy are so armed by  
"wit and fancy as to become sovereign  
"of rational powers, to triumph over all  
"the affections, and manage our smiles  
"and our tears at pleasure, how wondrous a conquest might be obtained  
"over a wild world, and reduce it at  
"least to sobriety, if the same happy  
"talent were employed in dressing the  
"scenes of religion in their proper  
"figures of majesty, sweetness, and  
"terror!" These seem familiar common-places now ; but in Watts's time the project was a daring one ; and it is a little remarkable that it should first have been entertained, not by the Church party, which might be supposed to hold more liberal views regarding the embellishment of Divine worship, and which assuredly need have attached no prescriptive reverence to the but recently-authorized version of the Psalms by Tate and Brady, but by the austere Puritanic party, whose denunciation of ornament, both in architecture and in vestments, was one of their distinctive shibboleths.

Watts's hymns are some of the best of their class and period, for fervour and freedom from sectarian narrowness. But his contemporary fame was mostly built on his "*Hore Lyricæ*," in which he aims at a more reflective and elaborate style. As devotional pieces, adapted for private meditation, the first book of the "*Hore Lyricæ*" might stand a curious comparison with the "*Christian Year*." We might mark the characteristic difference, not merely between the theological standing points of Keble and of Watts, but between the styles of poetical expression on sacred subjects which were relished by the educated contemporaries of the one and of the other. For Watts did not address himself to vulgar or illiterate readers. His style was cultivated by classical learning, and by an acquaintance with French composition. In fact, it is the lingering imitation of French models that we detect in the stilted diction common to most fine writers of that age ; and which, when applied to sacred poetry by Watts and



others, resulted in a sort of compound of the sentiment of Le Grand Cyrus and that of Solomon's Song. How much unction was felt in George I.'s days, for the fervid style of those pieces on Divine Love in the "*Horæ Lyricæ*," which now shock our taste, is testified by the numerous commendatory verses, couched in similar warmth of language, which were appended to the later editions. Thus writes Mrs. Elizabeth Rowe :—

"No gay Alexis in the grove  
Shall be my future theme :  
I burn with an immortal love,  
And sing a purer flame.  
"Seraphic heights I seem to gain,  
And sacred transports feel,  
While, Watts, to thy celestial strain,  
Surprised, I listen still."

Thus was accomplished the somewhat curious alliance of Nonconformity with a propensity for rhyme. The Dissenters, Presbyterian and Independent, notwithstanding their proverbial stiffness and dislike of ornament in religious worship, did, nevertheless, take a march in the flowery paths of metre, from which phlegmatic Churchmen held aloof. The early days of the Hanoverian dynasty are noted for a lethargy and poverty in all matters of taste and imagination; yet a constant succession of Calvinist ministers continued to turn into verse the rigid doctrines of their creed, and the "experiences" of the spiritual life; and, notwithstanding the monotony which results from the limited range of subjects on which they allowed themselves to expatiate, will sometimes be found to have touched a chord of true feeling, to which the heart of any Christian might respond. Doddridge, with some of the fashionable affectation of his class, some of the amatory exaggeration to which we have alluded, was tender and earnest. It is a curious trait of the liberalism, or latitudinarianism, as some would say, of the days in which his lot was cast, that some of his hymns, Dissenter as he was, were admitted into our Common Prayer-Book,

where they still retain their place. But Doddridge lived on terms of friendship and correspondence with several divines, and even prelates, of the Church of England, and was a favourite spiritual counsellor of some ladies of rank. Perhaps his accommodating temper may have a little compromised, at times, the strictness of his theology.

Augustus Toplady, Vicar of Broad Hembury, in Devonshire, was a man of a different stamp. Whimsical, hard-headed, and extreme in his opinions, he hated an Arminian with right good will. Yet some of his hymns are favourites even to this day with persons of directly opposite views to those he entertained. Dr. Pusey, who would have fought *à l'outrance* with Toplady on almost any point of dogmatic theology, has recorded his fervid admiration of the hymn beginning,

"Rock of Ages cleft for me,  
Let me hide myself in Thee," &c.

which finds its place in almost every collection, for Church or conventicle.

The cultivation of hymns by the Wesleyan Methodists was undertaken in a yet more systematic and purpose-like manner than among the old Calvinists. Hymns were regarded by John Wesley, and his brother, much as they were by the author of a greater religious "revival," Martin Luther, as an essential part of his liturgical apparatus. Like Luther's, his spiritual songs, and those of his brother, were the outbursts of a naturally demonstrative nature, and of a temperament inclined to music and verse. They were appeals sent straight to the consciences and feelings of his hearers. They were for the most part intense and overwrought in tone, compared with those of the German Reformer; but, like them, they have retained a hold over the affections of a religious party, to which no other sacred verse among us can furnish any parallel. The sect of the Wesleyan Methodists, indeed, consists, and has always consisted, mostly of the "lower orders." The very circumstance that the Methodist hymns were popular with those for whom they were

primarily intended, would deter them from gaining wide acceptance with the educated classes. For it is unquestionable that in England our higher and lower ranks have difficulty in meeting on any common ground of *sentiment*. Any approximation of this sort among us is commonly artificial and temporary. This is partly owing to the reserve of the one class, partly to the want of any poetical refinement in the other. In Germany, on the other hand, and even in the sister kingdom, north of the Tweed, the noble and the peasant are very commonly moved by the same spell of poetical association, be it in matters of history or of religion. Witness in Germany the *Kirchenlied*, to which princes and divines, titled ladies, artisans, jurists, physicians, all professions and all ranks, have contributed, till the body of sacred song has reached the proportions of a great national monument. Witness in Scotland the strong attachment felt by the people to the Psalms and Paraphrases of the Kirk, and the way in which these mingle with their every-day contemplations. Of historical and traditional associations it is not our place here to speak; but the difference of character between ourselves and our northern neighbours is, perhaps, even more strikingly displayed in this respect.

Meanwhile the stream of Calvinist verse flowed on through John Newton and Cowper. Here it encountered a mind of true genius; and, as genius is never satisfied with passing on a mere transcript of former fashions, but must needs interpret for itself, in its own way, the features of nature, and of human life around it, so with Cowper a modification of character was introduced into our sacred poetry, which in great measure it still retains.

John Newton, of Olney, was one of those vigorous enthusiasts, uniting narrowness of spirit with a vast breadth of common sense, and a thoroughly genial disposition, of which our evangelical school has been very productive. He swayed the gentle impressible mind of Cowper, as a strong though coarse will

is often found to sway sensitive genius. The pressure was too strong. The old wine was poured into the new bottles, and, finally, the bottles broke; but, meanwhile, the flavour was enriched and mellowed. The more the composition of the vessel told upon the quality of the liquid, the more the former crudeness disappeared. Even in Cowper's "Olney Hymns," which were written at Newton's prescription, we discern the poetic grace and sweetness of his fancy often controlling the rigid doctrinalism of his theory. His lines on the "Wisdom" of Proverbs, ch. viii. have much freedom and force of diction. Those on "Retirement," "Far from the world, O Lord, I flee," are an unaffected transcript of his own pensive temperament. But, in general, these hymns are too much squared to a pattern, in order to suit the requirements of his Evangelical guides. It is not in his "Olney Hymns" that we are to seek for his true poetry. It was not by them that he became the favourite bard of the religious world. Cowper possessed, if not a very powerful, at least a pure and an original genius. No writing hymns "to order" for Newton, and his fellow apostles, could satisfy the instincts of his heart. His true genius is to be found in the discursive verse which was the outpouring of his unfettered thoughts, the solace of his painful existence; for, in addition to the religious affections which made him yearn to God as a Father, even when his dark delusions made him conceive of Him as an angry and offended Father, Cowper possessed also a poet's love of nature; in other words, the Almighty, in His works of creation, was as much an object of attraction to his sensitive mind, as in His work of redemption; and the gloom which his dogmatic views of religion, unrelieved, would have rendered as deep in his poetry as in his life, was tempered in the former by the loving study of the great Parent's manifestations.

Cowper was a thoroughly *English* poet; and this, perhaps, was unconsciously one cause of his popularity at an era when national sentiment, as well as evangelical piety, was called into strong self-asser-

tion by the events consequent on the French Revolution. Perhaps it is impossible to name one of our classical bards so thoroughly free from every tinge of foreign style or sentiment. The days of German imitation, indeed, had not yet arrived, but our poetry had hardly worked itself free from French fashions, and Latin pomposity had but recently accomplished a majestic march in the measures of Johnson. Moreover, there was a sort of conventional diction afloat, which, if not easy at first sight to assign to a foreign parentage, was scarcely less of an exotic, compared to the plain-spoken English which Cowper brought into competition with it. Another characteristic we observe in this poet, distinguishing him from the Calvinistic rhymesters who preceded him, is his strong *moralizing* vein. Morality had been kept so completely subordinate to the doctrines and experiences of faith by the party to which he belonged, that, from the days of Watts to those of Cowper, scarcely any mention of practical virtues is to be found in the verse that emanated from that source.

But it was to men's daily tasks and daily responsibilities that Cowper addressed himself; and his example, followed, as it was, by many writers of various degrees of merit, contributed to give to the evangelical school of this century its practical, domestic style of manners and feeling. It influenced, indeed, the character of our religious poetry more permanently than we may be generally aware of, and still survives the varieties of taste which that branch of composition has subsequently experienced.

The later times of the continental war were coincident with a spirit of romance and martial enterprise in our land, of which, as secular poets, Scott, Byron, and Campbell, were apt representatives. The hymns of Heber and Milman exhibit not a little of the colouring imparted even to religious poetry by the spirit-stirring influences of the day. There is something of almost chivalrous ardour in such strains as "From Greenland's icy mountains;" or again, "The

Son of God goes forth to war." And, in the collection published by these writers, we, for the first time, witness an attempt to make the Church of England poetical by bringing her weekly services into connexion with the subjects of verse. We have alluded to James Montgomery. He, too, deserves notice as a writer of devotional lyrics, full of beauty, both of feeling and expression. He was a member of the Moravian Society; and his hymns, though more finished and graceful than those of the Wesleys, are, like them, chiefly concerned with the work of religion on the soul. It is by them, more than by his longer poems, that his merit is most generally recognised.

But the next important era in our religious poetry after the date of Cowper, was that of Wordsworth. The "Lake School," so called, of which he was the principal leader—contemplative and philosophical in character—did not obtain a fair hearing till after the war and its immediate effects had subsided. Wordsworth was not a sacred poet, as the phrase is generally understood. Nevertheless, he has done much to mould our sacred poetry; more, probably, than any other poet within the range of our literature, save Spenser, Milton, and Cowper. The influence of Spenser belongs to a state of things long passed away, and we have nothing to say of him in this place; but it may be not uninteresting to bring some points of Wordsworth's genius into comparison with that of the other two: mentioned together, not for a moment as comparing them in merit, but because they both represent certain phases of thought, significant for our present purpose.

Milton, Cowper, and Wordsworth, each dealt with the appearances of nature, and with man's relations to the spiritual world. How did they severally approach those topics? Milton wrote of religion on its God-ward side. His imagination soared to the courts of heaven with the characteristic daring of the Puritanism of his age. He ventured to interpret the Almighty's counsels for the fate of man. His love of nature

led him to delight in those descriptions of her beauties which, for grandeur of diction, scarce any poet in any age or country has come near; but he contemplated the material universe entirely as God's handmaid and tributary. Its morning skies, its nightly splendours, were all parts of the triumphant chant that was for ever arising from His works below as from His angels above.

Cowper wrote of religion on its human side—of religion as applied to the every-day thoughts and habits of life. He loved to regard nature as a message to man's heart from his ever-present Father, and a means of devout communion with Him. In Milton's view, nature was rather a display of God's transcendent majesty; in that of Cowper, it was the voice of His paternal love.

With both these poets, the idea of God as revealed in the Bible gave the key-note to their meditations. Herein lies the difference between their standing-point and that of Wordsworth. The latter aims rather at a philosophic appreciation of nature's influence over the heart, apart from system or creed. He looks upon her in the light of a teacher, to guide man to self-knowledge and self-discipline, without the *à priori* assumption of a Revelation, by which the sentiment both of Milton and of Cowper is determined. Perhaps we may say that the elevation of nature to the rank of an independent teacher was a gradual process; that, while Milton looked upon her as the Almighty's work of power and exceeding beauty, and nothing more, Cowper had already begun to listen to her with something of the spirit of a disciple, before Wordsworth advanced her authoritative claims to be studied and obeyed. But something also was derived from the ideas which the study of German had begun to infuse into our poetical literature:

"Erkennest dann der Sterne Lauf;  
Und wenn Natur dich unterweist,  
Dann geht die Seelenkraft dir auf,  
Wie spricht ein Geist zum andern  
Geist."

These lines of Göthe's are but the condensation of Wordsworth's creed as developed in his beautiful poem on Tintern Abbey:

"I have felt  
A presence that disturbs me with the  
sense  
Of elevated thoughts; a sense sublime  
Of something far more deeply interfused,  
Whose dwelling is the light of setting  
suns,  
And the blue sky, and in the mind of  
man:  
A motion and a spirit, that impels  
All thinking things, all objects of all  
thought,  
And rolls through all things," &c.

It is evident, we repeat, that Wordsworth is not a sacred poet in the sense which any doctrinal zealots would accept. The religion he preaches is that, to use his own expression, of "a dreamer in the woods." True, it is very earnest and sublime, thoroughly pervaded by a sense of the moral government of God, and in harmony with revealed Faith. Still, revealed Faith is not the postulate on which it rests. We are not speaking of the ecclesiastical sonnets, in which he sentimentalizes on the worship and history of the Church of England, nor of other occasional pieces, but of that part of his poetry which is really original and characteristic of his genius, and which, as such, has imparted a new stock of ideas to the world. It follows, consistently enough, that, with the Evangelical party, Wordsworth has never been a favourite. But it is a fact that we see the evidence of his training in almost all other religious poets of the present day; not only in those of more liberal or fanciful views, but in those whose high Ecclesiasticism one would think was little enough in accordance with the very unsystematic faith of the Excursion and the Ode on Immortality. It so happened that Wordsworth had outlived his detractors, and become a popular poet, just about the time that the Oxford High-Church views were forming. In the alliance that took place between these two tendencies of

thought, Keble led the way ; and, if we ask what was the ground of the mutual attraction between such apparently opposite modes of thought, we shall perhaps detect it,

First, in the calm placid tone of feeling, the avoidance of all passionate emotion or expression, which, while in Wordsworth it was to some extent a reaction from the fire and tempest of Scott and Byron, was likewise aimed at by the Anglican religionists as a reaction from the excitement and fervour of the Evangelicals.

Secondly, in the encouragement given to the taste for symbolism by Wordsworth's reverential feeling for the material universe in all its parts. Wordsworth himself was *not* a symbolist, but he *was* in some sense a mystic. It was the informing Spirit of Nature that he worshipped almost. To contemplate that spirit as typical of a revealed and ecclesiastically organized system, was altogether foreign to his turn of thought ; but the combination was easily made by those whose favourite dream it was to find the visible Church and its adjuncts shadowed everywhere.

Here, then, we have found our way to the historical position which Keble, as a sacred poet, occupies amongst us. Coming when modern Puritanism had reached its culminating point, and when, together with the rise of a new set of theological ideas, a new first-rate poet stood ready for imitation and adaptation, he inaugurated a fresh school of religious verse. Numerous have been his imitators ; and, as is generally the case, they have exaggerated his peculiar characteristics into more or less of a conventional cant. But he was himself early imbued with the teaching of an older school. His religious sentiment was grounded rather on the biblical associations of the long dominant Puritanism, than on the mediæval associations of the Anglican Revival, which he himself contributed to bring about ; and in these respects he stands in advantageous comparison with the writers referred to. Though frequently obscure and fanciful, Keble is not affected. His

No. 27.—VOL. V.

pathos is deep and tender ; his love and observation genuine, if a little overstrained in sentiment and expression. He manifests an experimental sense of human griefs and necessities, which, with all who have known sorrow, must ever accredit his title to be an expounder of the everlasting text, *Vanitas vanitatum* ! All these qualities have made him a lasting favourite, and not with sharers in his own opinions only. In fact, we have a curious evidence, how little the formalism of his ecclesiastical views struck the world at first as a prominent characteristic of his verse, in a criticism of Professor Wilson's, which appeared in *Blackwood's Magazine*, three years after the publication of the "Christian Year."<sup>1</sup> The critic here speaks of the new bard much as he would have spoken of one of the pious elders of the Scottish Kirk, whom his fancy loved to idealize, supposing such elder to have possessed the faculty of verse. The inspiration was in his eyes much the same. The Bible, the Sabbath, the peasant's cottage, and the *braes*, are the principal features in his description of the sources of Keble's poetry and of its influence. And so no doubt with most of the world, it was as *sentiment*, not as *system*, that much of the phraseology of the Oxford school was at first regarded. But then came the "Tracts for the Times," and made its real purpose clear ; and then, as in prose, so also in verse, a stereotyped set of notions and expressions soon came into vogue, limiting and hampering on every side that free communion with the heart and with nature which can alone ensure genuine power. Keble, not himself an original poet, though the originator of a new tendency of poetry, became the subject of imitation. Patristic allegorizing and mediæval hymnody were more and more resorted to as sources of inspiration, and much mawkish or dogmatic verse has been the result. The versifiers of this school indeed, have been mostly men of considerable attainment, and of more classical taste than the Methodists, of whatever

Blackwood, xxvii. 835.

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denomination, ever affected. But, wherever a poet writes to uphold a party and a system, rather than to interpret nature and the human heart, *cant* of one kind or another will be the inevitable result. With all the pious feeling and graceful versification, for example, of the author of the "Cathedral," there is *cant* in the superstitious reverence he expresses for architectural forms and symbols, as much, perhaps, though of a very opposite kind, as in the daring familiarities with Divine things and persons which are to be met with in Dissenting and Low-Church hymnody. The "Lyra Apostolica," published in 1836, in which Keble himself wrote, was a much more

formal exposition of opinion than the "Christian Year." Some of Keble's coadjutors in this work, in fact before long overstepped the extremest limits of the *Via Media*. But the fashion of this world passes away, in devotional poetry as in other things. Though Keble's first work retains its hold over the public mind, the Ultra-Tractarian school of verse is now very much at a discount. The hymns of the German Gesangbuch, on the other hand, have of late been numerous and repeatedly translated. The "Lyra Germanica" has many more readers at the present day than the "Lyra Apostolica."

## BEGGARS.

BY CHARLES ALLSTON COLLINS.

*"La mendicité est défendue dans le Département du Pas de Calais."*

This is one of the very first announcements which one reads on disembarking from the Dover packet. It is affixed to the celebrated gate of Calais, which Hogarth has immortalized, and a similar notice is to be found at the entrance to every one of the numerous departments of France. And, though there are just at this moment a great many beggars in Paris, it is yet certain that, as a rule, one is little annoyed by beggars as long as one remains in the French dominions.

It is not so here. In this free and happy country, the beggar thrives and prospers, persecutes, intimidates, and sometimes even, as will presently appear, makes a comfortable independence out of the credulity of the public. The days must surely be at hand when these things will be better looked after than they are at present; and, when these devouring tribes are no longer known among us, it will be interesting to have a record of their existence, as of any other obsolete species. It is such a record that I now

propose to draw up for the benefit of posterity.

It is a dreadful thing to be begged of. It is a dreadful thing to see Keziah Kadge waiting for one a few yards ahead by the side of the pavement. She has just been exhausting her eloquence upon a Greek gentleman, by whose side she has been ambling along all round the crescent, looking back straight into his eyes as she runs a little in front of him, which is the professional method, and a very effective one, too. She has abandoned the Greek, who is inexorable, and there she waits for you. You cannot escape her without absolutely turning back, and even then I hardly think you would get rid of her; for Keziah's time is her own, she is very accommodating, and may as well be going your way as any other. Is there any one who has not quailed when he has seen the beggar-woman thus waiting for him, or, still worse, crossing over the street higher up, ready to attack him as soon as he gets within fire? Her mode of address is monotonous and unvarying. "Do, good gentleman," she gasps, as she runs by your



side, for she is a hard feeder and short of breath, and it is common for the victim to "force the pace" a little, in order to get rid of her.

"Do, good gentleman, have compassion on a poor girl—had nothing to eat all day, and mother at home with the fever." This, by the bye, is a very good stroke, for if the persecuted pedestrian happens to be of a nervous nature, he will think it cheap to be rid of the danger of infection at the price of all the copper, or rather bronze, which he happens to have about him. This is followed, if the victim is still obdurate, by a volley of benedictions, expressions of a hope that he may never want "it;" which, considering that he has got "it," and probably means to keep "it," seem almost superfluous. Then follow awful appeals to the Supreme Being to corroborate the truth of her statement; and as this, if you are well initiated in the art of begging, at once decides you not to give, it is commonly succeeded by some muttered curses, "not loud, but deep," to which she gives vent as she stands, having at last given you up, and watches your retreating figure with hateful and malignant eyes.

Those curses are of about as much importance as the blessings which immediately preceded them; but how does a man feel during the enacting of such a scene as that described above? He feels annoyed and uncomfortable. If things have that day been going well with him, if he has just been receiving a sum of money, if he is going home or elsewhere to a good dinner, and to the enjoyment of all sorts of comfort, he will feel a kind of weak and illogical conviction that he ought to impart a penny share in his prosperity to Keziah Kadge. If he does this, he knows, and, perhaps, acknowledges to himself, that he is acting like a fool, but still he goes to his dinner or other enjoyments with Keziah's full sanction and permission, which he otherwise felt to be withheld. Are beggars skilled physiognomists? Does Keziah Kadge know the man who has done a good stroke of business by his countenance? It is far from improbable. Has

the reader ever observed that there are some days on which he is more solicited for alms than on others—the same, perhaps, chosen by children to ask what o'clock it is in the public streets, or to request him to pull, on their behalf, "the top bell-handle on the left-hand door-post?"

The class of mendicants of which Keziah Kadge is a specimen, is an especially bad one. She is a strong, young, able-bodied woman, and yet an habitual and professional beggar. It is doubtful, however, whether she is quite the worst specimen of all. She is what may be called the clamorous beggar; is she as bad as the silent beggar?

With the silent beggar we have all been long familiar, though it is only now, as we shall shortly see, that he has reached the culminating point of full development. The silent beggar is ordinarily a thin and sickly-looking individual. He dresses generally in seedy black, showing, however, an aggravatingly white shirt-front, which, in its spotless cleanliness, is part of his stock-in-trade, for he is "poor, but scrupulously clean." It is not unfrequently the case that nature will decorate the nose of the silent beggar with a fine vermilion tinge, which sets off the pallor of the other parts of his countenance to great advantage, and is—pray observe—in nowise the result of drinking. The scene chosen by the silent beggar for his mute appeal is generally one of our leading and most bustling thoroughfares, the Tottenham-court-road or that of Edgeware; and here, selecting a situation where there is a good flaring gas-light blazing full upon him—for night, and especially Saturday night, is his great time—he takes up his position. It is not, however, his practice to stand upon the pavement; he is far too humble for that. He stands in the road, just at the edge of the kerbstone, and, to complete the unobtrusive character of his appearance, holds himself in a slightly stooping position, with his head bent down, and never removing his gaze from the pavement, except on rare occasions, to glance around him in

a furtive manner as a means of ascertaining what amount of sensation he is making. He generally finds, when he permits himself this relaxation, that a good-natured wench, who has been sent out to buy vegetables, is standing looking back at him, regardless of the knocks she gets from the passers-by; so his eyes quickly return once more to the pavement, and presently a penny is thrust into his hand, and the good-natured wench goes on her way with a purse just so much the lighter for her misdirected mercy.

Sometimes the silent beggar holds in his clasped hands a lucifer-match box, sometimes a very thin account book, and two sticks of sealing-wax, which objects are understood to be offered for public purchase, in case the tide of commercial enterprise should set in such directions. Sometimes, again, the silent beggar is seen with a desperately clean wife, and even occasionally a raw-looking little girl, by his side, all three quietly contemplating the pavement, except, indeed, when the infant mendicant, with the volatile habits of childhood, will sometimes look cheerfully about at the different objects in her neighbourhood, in which case, however, she is speedily brought to order by means of severe knuckle correction between the shoulder-blades.

I have always regarded the silent beggar with immense dislike and suspicion, believing him to be a terrific savage in his family, and a wild and violent reveller in the dark slums of London, out of business hours. But what was the mendicant of this order formerly, to what he is now? The silent beggar has always been in the habit of cultivating a neat and highly respectable exterior, and he has been also found at intervals with a written placard hung round his neck, or placed before him on the pavement, where he reads it upside down all the day long. But now the silent beggar has gone a step farther; and it was only the other day that, seeing a considerable group of persons assembled in Trafalgar Square, and prying in among them, as an in-

sistive man should, I discovered that they were simply staring at a tall and stylishly-dressed gentleman, who was standing with his hat off, and his back against a wall, and a pasteboard inscription upon his breast, stating his claims to the consideration of the benevolent. Surely I was right in saying that it is only now that the silent beggar has reached the perfection of his development, for this gentleman was attired in a symmetrical and highly prosperous-looking suit of black, wore a pair of kid gloves, which fitted so perfectly, that it must have been a serious matter to get them on, and carried a jaunty Malacca cane in one of his hands. It really is scarcely too much to suppose after this, that we shall, in good time, have a silent beggar reining up his curricule by the side of the footway, and holding in a fiery "high-stepper" with one hand, while he stretches out a hat with the other. A beggar with gloves! a beggar with a Malacca cane! Allah is good; but what *shall* we hear of next?

I suppose that it is to this school of the silent beggars that the Indian, who crouches on one knee, and hides his villanous face as well as he can with his hands, legitimately belongs; for he never speaks, though he will shiver and chatter with his teeth by the hour together. He, too, has his claims to our regard written out in large text, and placed before him, an autobiographical notice, from which we may generally gather that he has been very ill-used, is himself immaculate, and is, as indeed are all his tribe, an eminently Christian character. So much is this the case with our Indian teeth-chatterer, that he is sometimes found with a collection of hymns, printed on single sheets of paper, trembling in his hands, and which, in his religious ardour, he is ready to supply to the public at the rate of one penny per sheet. This intolerable impostor, who, with his active, muscular figure, could get up and beat Deerfoot at a running-match if he chose, will crouch and shiver all day long for a livelihood, and a very good thing he makes of it; our friend, the good-natured servant-wench,

the great patron saint of mendicants, being rarely able to get past him without contributing to his wants. It would not surprise us to learn that these trembling gentlemen have a luxurious clubhouse of their own, where they all meet, after shivering hours, and where they pass the night in performing Nil Darpan, and cursing their British persecutors in a grateful and becoming manner.

From this servile, crawling, grovelling wretch, we turn, by a natural transition, to the cheerful and familiar beggar; a tremendous impostor, too, but of a different sort.

It is not long since that I was crossing over the road not far from Lumbago-terrace, Regent's-park, when I saw advancing to meet me at the other end of the crossing two persons, a man and a woman, who wore so gay and joyous an aspect at my approach, that I thought they knew me. The man was dressed in a snowy smock-frock, and wore tan-leather leggings; the woman was arrayed in a clean cotton gown, and a neat straw bonnet. I was beginning to think whether they were tenants of some country friend who remembered me, though I had forgotten them; for how else could I account for their being apparently so glad to see me? I was puzzling myself, I say, in this manner, when my friend, the model peasant, suddenly burst out with these remarkable words:—

"You haven't got," he said, grinning from ear to ear, and with a jovial roll of his head—"you haven't got such a thing as a copper for a poor fellow, have you? we're in wants of as much as will pay for a night's lodging."

After following me a short distance, and entering into the details of an excursion into "Daarsetshire," which he had in contemplation, and which he discussed in a loud and cheery tone, my agricultural friend gave me up, with a soft sigh and a genial "thank'ee all the same, sir," of terrific power, and fell back to his female accomplice. I have met this couple about continually since, and the man always smiles and touches his hat to me in a jaunty manner, without, however, attempting to stop. He calculates

on my thinking to myself, that "there really is something remarkable about this fellow," and then he imagines that I shall turn back and get into conversation with him. No, no, my friend, your smock-frock is too white, and your leather-leggings are too clean, and your get up altogether is too intensely agricultural, for me to imagine that you are acquainted with any other fields than those of Spital, or of still more sinister Tothill.

Perhaps, however, I should have fallen a victim to this honest fellow, if it had not happened that, only a day or two before I made his acquaintance, a middle-aged lady, with a reticule and a red nose, stopped suddenly directly before me in the street, and said, in a calm clear tone,

"Will you give me a penny, if you please?"

Before this accomplished artist, who may be called the unexpected beggar, I fell. She was too much for me, and, doubtless, my weakness in this case helped to give me force in the other instance.

While mentioning this matter of the unexpected beggar, and the difficulty of resisting her, I am reminded of another kind of unexpected Beggar, without mention of whom this category would be incomplete.

You are upstairs in your study, on the second floor. Your study is on that floor that you may be quiet, and, possibly, because you would be in the way on the dining-room, or drawing-room stages. You are engaged in study no matter of what nature—how to make both ends meet, perhaps. Presently, a handmaid taps at your door, and informs you that Mr. Jarvis is below, and wishes to speak with you. He will not detain you five minutes. You don't exactly remember the name, but no doubt it is somebody on business. You impress him by a brief delay, and descend.

On entering your drawing-room, you observe a gentleman seated with his back towards you. He waits till you are well into the room, and then rising, discloses himself to your regard, as a total stranger, a person of magnificent

appearance, and a foreigner, evidently of distinction. The following conversation then takes place :—

*Man of genius.* Mr. Jarvis, I believe.

*Foreigner of distinction.* No, bai no means—Charvet—Monsieur Jules Charvet, of the *Revue Ricaneuse*.

*Man of genius.* Oh, indeed [overtures from some foreign publishers no doubt—well, I shall make my own terms], take a seat, pray Monsieur—Monsieur—

*Foreigner of distinction.* Charvet. You will ask, perhaps, what is my object in thus intruding upon you ?

*Man of genius.* Not at all, Monsieur Charvet.

*Foreigner of distinction.* You are, I believe, the author of the leetle work, entaitled “Startles upaun Sleep.”

*Man of genius.* I must own that I am.

*Foreigner of distinction.* I am prauld and ‘appy to make your acquaintance. That work does you honour. It woot be goot that it should be translate.

*Man of genius* (internally). Ah, ha !

*Foreigner of distinction.* You are also the author of the “New Golconde, or Wealts at Weel.”

*Man of genius.* The “New Golconda, or Wealth at Will”—yes, indeed, I am.

*Foreigner of distinction.* Those works should be known by raights, wherever civilisation ritches. I am indeed prauld and ‘appy to know so distinguish a colleague, for I too am man of letters, as you shall know, no daout.

*Man of genius.* (Indistinct acquiescence.)

*Foreigner of distinction.* For the *Revue Ricaneuse* I have much written, my own books not succeeding, I write savage *revues* of those of others. I get together small news of personal kainds, and publish domestic matters belonging to distinguished families.

*Man of genius.* (Indistinct disapproval.)

*Foreigner of distinction.* But I ‘ave ‘ad ill-lock. I ‘ave not socceed. An enemy of maine, jealous of me, ‘ave threatened the *Revue Ricaneuse* with law, if I was not discharged for certain things I ‘ave

publish abaout ‘is affairs. Since then I ‘ave not prosper. I come to England. England, I say, is a great nation. The English man of letters is not jealous. I see a French actor come over ‘ere. He shows the English that they do not knaow ‘ow to act their own plays. I will show them too, that they do not knaow the meaning of their own leetature. It is a great work this, but I most ‘ave support whaile it is in progress. What am I to do ? I turn naturally to the forst men of the country in which I faind myself for help. I think immediate of the renown Mr. Startles—to him I apply myself without reserve, without daout.

In short, M. Charvet is a beggar, and, when he pulls out a volume of his collected works from his pocket, and offers them to you for ten shillings, it is twenty to one that, on the first occasion of such a visit at any rate, you will return to your studies in the art of making both ends meet, finding both those ends farther apart by the distance of half-a-sovereign than they were when you last considered the subject.

The beggar, who is kind enough to wait upon you at your own house, appears under many forms. Sometimes, as in the case of our friend just mentioned, he is an author, sometimes an artist, sometimes an inventor, while not unfrequently he comes to represent the wants of others, when he is more difficult to resist than ever.

Beware of the French gentleman who, addressing you in his native tongue in the public streets, asks you to direct him to a street, the name of which he has got inscribed upon a little scrap of dirty paper. When he asks you for an explanation of that direction, or requests you to inform him where the “*Société de Bienfaisance*” is located, give him a wide berth, for he means begging, and will bring the conversation round to that interesting topic in no time. It is the common practice of this kind of mendicant to address himself to young gentlemen, who appear to his serpent-like wisdom as if they would be flattered by being thought French scholars.

Such youths cannot resist answering in such French as they have at command, and from the moment when they thus consent to enter into conversation, they are lost.

Beware, again, how your sympathies are enlisted in behalf of a little innocent-looking boy who is crying bitterly over the fragments of a broken plate or jug, which has tumbled out of his hand. He has been sent to fetch something which the plate or jug was intended to contain; it has tumbled out of his hand and been broken into many atoms. The child is in an agony of grief, and dilates between his sobs upon the cruel consequences that will ensue when he returns home with the story of the broken plate. Now this would be all very well, and you would be doing quite right in contributing towards a new plate, if only you were quite sure that this was the first and only occasion on which our young friend has appeared with his knuckles screwed into his eyes, and a collection of fragments of the willow pattern at his feet. But what if all this which happens to-day at the corner of Baker-street, occurred yesterday opposite the Foundling, and will be repeated till further notice every day next week in divers parts of the metropolis?

This last-mentioned little mendicant is very difficult to harden oneself against. The same may be said of the woful elderly beggar, who addresses you only for a moment, on a wet night, just turning half round as you pass, and uttering one or two spiritless and broken words, abandoning his suit directly if it is not encouraged. Are there any who read these words, who have gone back a hundred or two of yards to relieve, not so much the beggar himself, as that more importunate mendicant who was pulling and dragging at the softer fibres of their hearts, pleading the cause of that drenched and lonely old man? Somehow I cannot class this sort of beggar with the rest, nor steel myself entirely against his claims.

But, in revenge, against the spouting beggar I can harden myself with ease. This is he who, advancing with slow steps along the very middle of the

street, holding a baby in his arms, and followed by a woman and other children, gives out his wrongs to the public ear in a loud and oratorical manner, beginning, "Hi ham a pore weaver," and interspersing his statement with many asides of a threatening character, addressed in a husky whisper to his wife and children. This group will occasionally awaken the echoes of Charlotte-street, Fitzroy-square, which is a favourite beggar-preserve, with the strain of the Old Hundredth, which is commonly interrupted with even more clinkings of halfpence on the pavement, thrown from upper windows, than is elicited by the weaver's narration of his own wrongs and sufferings. This is the same man who, when unable to afford the hire of a wife and family for choral psalm-singing and spouting purposes, lurks about our suburbs and lies in wait for ladies who are obliged to go out alone while their husbands are at business, and makes their walk so unpleasant to them with half-threatening, half-whining importunities, that they are glad enough to give him an alms to be rid of him. He is an intimate ally too of the man who does a mackerel, a moonlight, a mutton chop, and a head from Carlo Dolei on the pavement in crayons, and is well known to the sailor with no legs, who unrolls a painting of a shipwreck and stretches it out by his side, close to that blank-wall on the wrong side of Oxford-street, which communicates by gates with Hanover-square.

From these particular and distinct classifications of the different tribes of beggars, we turn naturally to a consideration of the subject in its broader and more general aspects.

In England, a beggar is always religious, and nearly always clean. Besides the hymns which we have seen that our Indian beggar is fond of retailing, there are little tracts which such personages commonly have on sale, and which, purporting to interest you in a dramatic story, soon make a digression into more theological matters, revealing how wonderfully a certain innocent Indian was once upon a time converted,



and how he prospered afterwards in a certain colony, and acquired a territory, and a house, and cattle and horses, and how he was taken into the confidence of the Missionaries, and became Treasurer to the Evening School Fund, and was interested with all sorts of other Funds as well, because he had said that "um " poor Sambo nebbber cared for gold " and silver, only lub im church and school;" at which point history drops the curtain, the historian being, doubtless, afraid of injuring his effect, which, indeed, might possibly have been done by dwelling any longer on Sambo's career.

The statements which Sambo and others chalk upon the pavement, or wear round their necks, are commonly interspersed with religious matter, and we have seen that, when Keziah Kadge runs by your side round the crescent, at the top of Portland-place, she is wont to utter words of sacred meaning, and to make professions of religion which cause one to shudder, and hasten more than ever out of ear-shot of such grievous mockery.

Then, as to cleanliness. The beggar who understands his business is always clean. It is not so abroad; sympathy in foreign climes is rather awakened than otherwise by dirt. The brisk movement of a flea attracts attention to the insect's proprietor, and relief may follow; a clean shirt on a beggar would not be understood, and it might turn out, if he wore one, that his linen was in better order than that of the gentleman whom he supplicates for alms. With us it is different. The English beggar thinks that, if he turns out clean, it will be thought that, at any rate, he is doing all he can, and that he is putting a good face upon his poverty, and making the best of it. I believe that there are no aprons known in the civilized world of such extraordinary cleanliness as those worn by Keziah Kadge, and I also believe that there is an especial manufactory of coarse linen carried on expressly with a view to the shirt-fronts of our silent beggars, they being of a thickness of thread, and of a whiteness

which has something unhallowed and altogether inexplicable about it.

All this tells with the British public. Indeed, the peculiar kind of linen just described, and especially when it is set in, or surrounded by, a suit of seedy black, is well-nigh irresistible. The fact is, that the irresistible class of beggars is a very large one, and it is astonishing how long an adroit and practised mendicant will keep his head above water. The Rev. Elliott Hadlow, for instance, who has recently been much harassed by the mendicity officers, has been upwards of twenty years "in the profession." This ill-used personage belonged to the noble order of the pavement-chalkers. The autobiographical notice with which he was wont to ornament the foot-way, was a short one. "I am," he used to write "a decayed schoolmaster, the author of eleven works, the last of which went through a fourth edition." Here was an appeal, which was not likely to be efficacious. What a delightful sensation for a passing schoolboy to bestow his penny, and feel that he was actually "tipping" a schoolmaster! What a glorious vengeance for the literary character whose works had never attained to a second, or third—not to say a first edition, to go and insult this successful author, this public favourite, with a present of a couple of new bronze half-pennies! How villainous that this interesting person's career should be cut short because an officer of the Mendicity Society, with no regard for literature, chooses to denounce the "decayed schoolmaster" as a well-known impostor, with whose history he (the officer) had been *acquainted for twenty-one years!* The author of the "eleven works," is on this occasion very candid, acknowledges that "he has been in the habit of begging, and that he has been previously brought before a magistrate for that offence, and that since that time he has managed to secure a pension of nineteen shillings and fourpence per month." This, of course, will not supply him with so many luxuries as it is natural he should require; so he flings himself, with his



eleven works, and his four editions, upon public sympathy, and with the world for his oyster, and a morsel of chalk to open it with, could get on very well if we would but let him alone.

He might even perhaps have got on as well as the great Keziah Kadge herself. This name, which in the earlier part of this notice has been applied to a fictitious character, is, incredible as it seems, a real name, and is after all not more difficult to believe in than the history of the worthy lady who bore it. This brief review of the present condition and prospects of the begging interest, would be so incomplete without the short and simple annals of Keziah Kadge, that I must ask leave to give them entire :—

“ Keziah Kadge, a decent-looking woman, attired as a widow, was charged before Alderman Carter, with begging under the following circumstances :

“ William Hewitt, one of the officers of the Mendicity Society, said that he saw the prisoner begging of several ladies, and, knowing her to be an old impostor, he took her into custody. He found on her sevenpence in silver and copper money, a *silver watch*, and a *porte-monnaie*. She refused her name and address.

“ Alderman Carter said, she could not have been in such great distress if she had a silver watch in her possession.

“ Hewitt said, that this was one of the worst cases of begging that he ever remembered ; that the prisoner, so far from being destitute, or in distress, actually had as much as 800*l.* or 900*l.* invested in the Bank of England, and that she drew her dividends regularly, upon which she ought to maintain herself ; but she was the greatest impostor in London, and had been in custody before for the same offence.

“ The prisoner admitted that she had had three months' imprisonment from the court, but that was some years ago, when her husband was alive. She only got a *shilling a day by her dividends*.

“ Hewitt said, he had witnesses who

“ could prove that the prisoner was a most determined beggar, and that she had expressed her intention to continue begging, until she could increase her capital so as to yield her 1*l.* per week, upon which she meant to retire into private life.

“ Prisoner whined a good deal, and begged forgiveness, but did not utter one promise to refrain from the life of imposition she was leading.”

I am happy to say that this magnificent impostor was merely detained for twenty-one days in the House of Correction, giving her dividends time to accumulate. Let us hope that she may speedily attain to the height of her ambition, and retire on a net income of 50*l.* per annum.

Seriously speaking, it is a grave question, whether something might not be done to get our streets a little clearer from beggars. Next year, hosts of foreigners, and more especially of our natural critics, the French, will be in London, and it would be well that we should have our streets in as creditable order as may be. Towards carrying out this object, surely, one valuable step would be made if we began by bringing to an immediate termination the careers of our younger practitioners in the art of begging. On the Surrey side of Waterloo Bridge, and in only too many other parts of London, there exist, as the reader has doubtless often remarked, whole hordes of young raggamuffins, who endeavour to extort money from the more good-natured and inconsiderate portion of the community, by running alongside of the omnibuses and cabs, which pass by their beat, and turning summersaults as near the wheels of the vehicles as may be done with security to that safest of all things—a vagabond's life. These youngsters are just entering life, and are entering it by just one of the very worst thoroughfares with which we are acquainted. Would it not be a real charity to them, as well as to the world at large, to lay a merciful hand upon them, and turn them back before they advance further along that grievous path, which begins in the New Cut and

ends in the Old Bailey? We must consider the future of these children. It may be urged, that there is no particular harm in running along by the side of a carriage, and emulating, by means of the arms and legs, the example of the wheel, on which the vehicle rolls; but what we have to consider is, what this is to end in. There comes a time when this branch of the begging profession must be abandoned, and then the little urchin

we have laughed at grows up and becomes—what? A vagabond. Prevention is better than cure, and, though we can easily train the young plant when it first shows its green shoots above ground, it is not easy to do anything with the full-grown tree, unless to cut it down. We should have, at any rate, fewer grown-up beggars about our streets, if we thus arrested the career of the young beginners at its earliest commencement.

### OUR DIPLOMATIC AND CONSULAR SERVICES.

SINCE the introduction of the examination system into the Civil Service, public attention has been directed to the different branches of the Home Service, but the working of the colonial and foreign departments has remained as much unknown as ever. And yet a knowledge of the mode of management of our colonial and foreign relations is one which would not only be useful in the way of general information, but would materially assist in forming an accurate opinion on many of the questions of the day. The recent Parliamentary inquiries into the diplomatic and consular services, as well as the events of the day, suggest that this would be a favourable time for giving some account of their present state, and of the changes which appear to be in contemplation, as well as to offer some observations respecting these professions. The general impression on the subject has hitherto been, that the members of these bodies have resided at agreeable places abroad, have enjoyed handsome salaries, and have had light duties to perform; but, while the result of the inquiries referred to has been to point out more clearly what the advantages of their professions actually are, they have unfolded counterbalancing circumstances which had previously been overlooked.

The Foreign Office has kept itself out of any very prominent public notice, in consequence of its official business being so conducted as to avoid the palpable disorder into which the War Office and the

Admiralty have of late years fallen; and this has arisen from its staff being sufficient for the work to be done, from the ability of the successive Foreign Secretaries, and from the circumstance, that having had, for many years, a good reputation as a well-conducted government-office, an efficient class of men have obtained appointments in it. Much also is to be attributed to Lord Palmerston's long tenure of the post of Foreign Secretary. His extreme attention to matters of detail, on the proper discharge of which the character of any public office mainly depends, has had a most beneficial effect in forming sound business habits among the senior clerks.

The staff of the Foreign Office consists of two under-secretaries, one assistant under-secretary, forty-one clerks on the establishment, divided into five classes, and about twenty supplementary clerks attached to various departments. There are also translators of European and Oriental languages, and the *employés* necessary for printing confidential papers, binding old despatches, and for managing a branch of one of the foreign lines of telegraph.

The office is divided into eleven divisions or departments, which are under the supervision of one or other of the under-secretaries: of these, six are political, and the others transact the treaty, slave trade, consular, finance, and passport, and the librarian's on general reference business. The office hours begin at eleven, and end when the

work of the day is done; differing in this respect from other public offices, which have fixed and regular hours of attendance. The amount of work to be done is said to vary considerably, sometimes being very slight, and at other times overwhelming. The business is transacted in the following manner:—There are four clerks resident in the office, who in turn attend to the receipt of despatches out of office hours, and forward them to the under-secretaries, by whom they are sent on to the Secretary of State. He returns them to the under-secretary, giving on each such directions as they appear to require, or asking for further information, and the under-secretary sends them out to the proper department to be registered and acted upon. Letters which arrive in office hours go to the under-secretary direct, and follow the same course. Drafts of answers are written by the senior clerk of the department to which they belong, and are submitted by him to the superintending under-secretary, who, in matters of importance, consults the Secretary of State. All drafts of political despatches are sent for approval to the Prime Minister and to the Queen, before the despatch is sent off. Despatches received are also sent to the Prime Minister and the Queen, and are afterwards circulated among the Cabinet Ministers. Business is carried on with great rapidity, and letters are often received and disposed of on the same day.

The salaries at the Foreign Office are as follows:—The permanent under-secretary receives 2,000*l.* a year; the parliamentary and the assistant under-secretary receive 1,500*l.* each. The chief clerk, who superintends the finance and passport business, has a salary of 1,000*l.*, increasing at 50*l.* to 1,250*l.* The salaries of the five classes of the ordinary clerks range—

8 senior clerks at 700 <i>l.</i> , increasing at 25 <i>l.</i> a year to 1,000 <i>l.</i>			
8 assistant clerks	„	550 <i>l.</i>	20 <i>l.</i>
10 first-class junior clerks	„	350 <i>l.</i>	20 <i>l.</i>
9 second-class junior clerks	„	150 <i>l.</i>	10 <i>l.</i>
6 third-class junior clerks	„	100 <i>l.</i>	10 <i>l.</i>

The salaries of the supplemental clerks vary, but are smaller in proportion to the above list. Promotion is by seniority, but no extra pay is given for work done after the nominal six hours of attendance, as is the case in many other Government offices.

The competition system of examination has been applied to clerkships. On a vacancy occurring, three candidates are named by the Secretary of State, who are examined by the Civil Service Commissioners,

1. In handwriting.
2. In writing English and French from dictation.
3. In French.
4. In making a *précis* or abstract of papers.

In cases of equality, a knowledge of German is to decide to whom the preference is to be given. The limit of age is between eighteen and twenty-four.

Such is a brief sketch of the organization of the Foreign Office, and of the system of transacting business adopted there. This system has certainly succeeded in preventing the confusion from arising which has elsewhere taken place; while the amount of salary, and the prospect of regular promotion, combined with the social position which its service is supposed to give, have obtained for the office a higher character than that of most other public establishments.

The diplomatic corps is divided into the heads of missions and their subordinates. The former consists of ambassadors, envoys, ministers and *chargés des affaires*. The subordinate *employés* are secretaries of embassy and legation, and paid and unpaid *attachés*. The career is in theory a regular one, and it is supposed that a man begins as unpaid *attaché*, and works his way up to the top of the profession; but this is by no means the case in practice, for there are numerous instances of “interlopers,” possessing strong political influence, having been brought in and put over the heads of those who have devoted their lives to the service.

Diplomacy with us has been the branch of the Civil Service where personal influence has done most for a man, and individual talent has done least. Considerable influence has hitherto been required to get a nomination to an appointment connected with the Foreign Office, and *attachéships*, in particular, have been strictly confined to the aristocracy. Interest is required to get the first appointment; interest has to be exerted to obtain each step of promotion; and interest again is of essential use in obtaining a post at an agreeable place of residence. When an *attaché* is first appointed, he works for several years without pay, and has to defray himself all the expenses of his outfit and journey to his post; if he possesses strong influence, he may be nominated a paid *attaché* after about two years' service, but otherwise he may have to wait eight or ten years, or even longer, before a compassionate Secretary of State will take pity on him. Afterwards, when his turn for promotion as secretary would naturally come, he may have to take a post in South America, and leave European appointments to his more fortunate colleagues. It may excite some surprise, that under these circumstances men should be found so eager to enter the diplomatic service; but every one at twenty indulges in strong hopes of individual good fortune, and relies on his own talents and interest, and calls to mind the instances of persons who, in their career as diplomatists, have won the highest honours of the State. Diplomacy, on the other hand, as a profession, has great and peculiar advantages. It procures an introduction to the best society in every country, and brings its members into direct personal contact with the leading men of the age; and, moreover, it soon affords, especially at the large capitals, a pleasure which a man is most unwilling to give up. We see in our own day, from the publication of the secret despatches, and various private letters, and other documents of former centuries, what different ideas of men and things were entertained by statesmen and by the public

generally; for instance, what new light has been by this means thrown on the policy of Elizabeth and of the sovereigns and ministers of that era. The members of the diplomatic body are behind the scenes, as it were, of public life; and, though we are doubtless unwilling to think that posterity will know as many secrets about the events of our age as we know about the events of bygone times, yet we are much mistaken if the history of Queen Victoria's reign would not be very differently written by a contemporary, and by a historian living in the reign of Albert the Sixth.

It must also be observed that, until lately, diplomacy was not even so strictly a profession as it is now. Originally, ambassadors were only occasionally sent; and, although resident missions have now been established for about two centuries, the different gradations of diplomatic rank have been slowly and gradually defined and recognised. An ambassador had a secretary to assist him, who was furnished with a royal commission, and was allowed to "attach" such persons as he liked to his legation, who, in return for the advantages which they thus obtained, assisted in the discharge of the official business. Such was the origin of *attachés*. A property qualification was necessary for those who went abroad in this manner, and this requirement has been strictly kept up. Some persons having been retained long at a particular place, and having rendered themselves useful, obtained a salary and further advancement in the service. But, although the Foreign Office has so much encroached on the patronage of ministers abroad that *attachéships* are almost invariably conferred by the Secretary of State, a man, even at the present time, does not become a regular servant of the Crown by holding a commission until he is appointed secretary of legation or embassy. Formerly also, on a change of ministry at home, British representatives abroad were removed, and were succeeded by members of the same political party as the new ministry; but

this has ceased to be the case of late years, and our representatives are, as a rule, retained longer at the same post than those of other powers—a change which has been productive of much benefit to the service, by enabling our ministers to fix their attention on foreign questions, and by rendering them more independent.

At many of the embassies the amount of work to be done is considerable. At Paris, attendance has to be given for seven hours daily, nor is Sunday by any means a day of rest. In fact, messengers are so sent from London, that both at Paris and Vienna, Sunday is the day when they arrive, and much business has therefore necessarily to be done on that day. The business of our embassies is of a commercial, as well as of a political nature. Besides keeping the Government informed with regard to all political events, reports are required to be made on important commercial questions, accompanied frequently by statistical tables. Copies have to be sent home of all public notices relative to navigation, and of decrees and laws affecting trade, and vast correspondence takes place on matters connected with the commercial interests of British subjects in foreign countries, their complaints against local authorities, and not unfrequently the loss of their luggage, or other mishaps which befall them in travelling. Several notarial acts, when done abroad, are required by law to be performed before a minister or secretary. It thus appears that the office of a British minister at a foreign court is, at the present day, by no means a sinecure. Communication between the Foreign Office and the different missions takes place by means of messengers sent at stated times, as well as by post.

*Attachés*, on their nomination, have to pass an examination before the Civil Service Commissioners. This examination has hitherto not been competitive, and comprises the following subjects: Handwriting; English and French dictation; French; translation from either German, Latin, Spanish, or Italian; geography; making abstracts of papers;

modern history since 1789, and particularly that of the country to which they are going. On promotion to the rank of paid *attaché*, several examinations have to be passed in the languages of the countries in which they may have resided since their appointment, a report has to be made on the commercial and political relations of those countries, their institutions, &c., and a knowledge of international law has to be shown.

The present rates of salary are as follows:—

Ambassadors	receive from 10,000 <i>l.</i> to 7,000 <i>l.</i> a year.
Ministers	5,000 <i>l.</i> „ 2,000 <i>l.</i> „
Chargé d'Affaires	2,000 <i>l.</i> „ 1,400 <i>l.</i> „
Secretaries	1,000 <i>l.</i> „ 400 <i>l.</i> „
Paid Attachés	500 <i>l.</i> „ 250 <i>l.</i> „

The larger salaries are, of course, assigned to the principal posts, not only on account of the more important duties to be performed, but also on account of the expense of living.

With regard to the question of salaries, we do not think that the diplomatic profession has, on the whole, any reason to complain. The desire which some of our ministers evince to run a race in extravagance with their French colleagues, ought not to be encouraged. We have lately seen what the consequence has been in France of every department of the Government giving way to a prodigal expenditure of the public money, and we have no wish to see the introduction of any similar spirit in our service. Our diplomatists should understand that they are sent abroad to watch over the interests of England and the general cause of human progress, and not to set an example of extravagance and ostentation. In former years, it was customary for ministers to give presents to persons connected with the Court to which they were accredited: we believe that England was the first power to relinquish this practice, and our influence abroad has suffered no diminution in consequence. Again, most other nations confer decorations profusely on foreign diplomatists, but England has always abstained from doing so, even when they have been almost asked for. Prince Meternich was very desirous of obtaining a garter; but not even his



services, in bringing Austria to side with the Allied Powers against Napoleon, would induce the English Ministry to depart from the established rule. Our regulations on this point have not injured our influence, and we feel sure that, if the expenditure of our representatives was restricted to moderate limits, they would not be less respected, nor the just influence of this country be weakened. We regret to observe, that both Lord Stratford de Redcliffe and Lord John Russell said, before the Committee of the House of Commons on the Diplomatic service, that our representatives ought to live in the same manner, and at the same rate, as the highest class of society in the country in which they reside. It appears to us that this statement may lead to very erroneous impressions. The persons referred to possess country houses and estates which necessitate a large expenditure; and it appears to us that our ministers, instead of being provided with an income to enable them to vie with this class of society, should have an income sufficient to enable them to maintain a position *in town* equal to that of the ministers of state at the place of their residence. A house should also be provided at Government expense; it should be taken on lease for a term of years, and not be the actual property of Government; for, at Paris, where the embassy-house has been purchased, the cost of keeping it in repair would have sufficed to build it several times over. Constantinople, and other eastern capitals, are the only exceptions to this rule.

The difference in position between an ambassador and a minister is, that the former is always enabled to obtain an audience of the sovereign, and to bring matters to his personal knowledge, whereas a minister has not this privilege. It is therefore of consequence to be represented by an ambassador at the court of an absolute monarch, but the same necessity does not exist at places where the administration is in the hands of a cabinet responsible to a chamber elected by the people.

Though we consider that our representatives abroad are sufficiently paid, we must say that the secretaries of embassy and legation, whose salaries, as before stated, range from 1,000*l.* to 400*l.* are underpaid. A man must serve for many years before he attains to this rank, and when he obtains this step in promotion, he has to look forward to another long period of service before he can expect further promotion. Of course there are instances of persons who are pushed rapidly forward; but this is the ordinary case, and we are therefore inclined to think that the pay of secretaries ought to be sufficient for the maintenance of themselves and their families. Nor would this involve any great additional expense; for, by the universally recognised rules of the diplomatic service, secretaries are not expected to give entertainments, or to attempt to vie with their chiefs. At the present time, *attachés*, when they receive a salary, receive sufficient remuneration. The Committee of the House of Commons recommend that a salary shall always be given after four years' service. This proposal would certainly remove the injustice, or rather positive dishonesty, of the present system, by which a young man may have to work for ten years without receiving any remuneration. In no profession does a young man support himself at first starting, and there is no reason why an exception should be made in favour of the diplomatic service; but we think it would be better if a salary of 100*l.* a year was given for the first four years of service. Paid servants are better than unpaid; and even this moderate salary, by opening out the diplomatic career, would tend to obviate the injurious effect which the existing system has, by excluding many men on account of the high property qualifications, by no means necessary, which is now so strictly enforced; while it would have the further good effect of checking the extravagance now so prevalent.

The rule as to diplomatic pensions is, that no person can obtain one until fifteen years have elapsed since the date



of his first commission, ten of which must have been passed in active service. But, as commissions are not given to *attachés*, the time previous to an appointment as secretary is not counted in computing pensions, and it was of course felt to be a great injustice that so long a period as ten years or more should be quite thrown away in this respect. The committee have, therefore, very fairly proposed that a commission should be given after four years' service; and, further, that the title of "*Paid Attaché*" should be abolished, and different classes of secretaries formed, in order to place our diplomatic service on the same footing as that of other countries.

The committee also represent, that the regulation by which half the salary of ministers is deducted during the whole term they may be absent from their posts, presses with undue severity on them. It would certainly seem that they should be encouraged to visit England as often as is compatible with the proper discharge of their duties, for it is of essential service to a diplomatist to keep up an accurate acquaintance with the state of public feeling in his own country. Secretaries and *attachés* have no deduction made for the first two months that they are absent from their post in each year; and it seems proper that the same rule should apply to ministers, especially as the expenses incidental to carrying on the work at missions abroad are included in the accounts of "*extraordinaries*," and do not fall on the minister himself. These accounts, it must also be stated, have increased largely of late years, and call for serious attention and revision.

As the clerks of the Foreign Office are supposed to hold a position equivalent to the members of the diplomatic corps, many persons have advocated a complete amalgamation between the two services, and the committee favour the idea so far as to recommend that individuals in each should be permitted to exchange posts. But the authorities who would have most weight in deciding such questions are opposed to the

scheme, although they acknowledge the advantages which would result if the members of the two branches of the service had respectively more experience of the working of the other branch. There appears to be a rule by which two clerks of the Foreign Office are to be employed abroad. It is said to be "*negligently observed*;" but, if it were so applied as to enable all the clerks to go abroad in rotation, instead of the same person being sent repeatedly, and if members of diplomatic corps were required to attend for a longer period at the office instead of only for three months on their first appointment, according to the present practice, the advantages of both systems would be secured, while the disadvantages of each would be obviated.

It now remains to be seen how our diplomatic service practically works. An ambassador should be a man well acquainted with political life, and should possess the qualities necessary to ensure success in his profession rather than a great amount of book learning. Success in diplomacy depends, chiefly, on individual talent and experience. A diplomatist should have a great command of temper; he should not be too ready to suspect evil, and, if he does so, must not too clearly show it; he should pay particular attention to the interests of those with whom he is negotiating, and be able to distinguish between their language and their intentions. He must not only be able to reason well and soundly, but his manner must be conciliatory, and equally so whether discussing points of difference or questions on which a perfect understanding exists. The great art is, to make others adopt our own views, by putting them in such a manner that they may be seized and put forward as their own by those whom we wish to adopt them. It is undoubtedly true, that a man new to the service may succeed perfectly in a particular case; but, in order to obtain general success, a man must, as in every other profession, have devoted to it the best years of his life. When we consider how frequently the decision of very im-

portant questions, sometimes even the determination of peace or war, may depend on the personal character and manner of an ambassador, we see the paramount necessity of the qualifications which can only be acquired by the experience of many years of service. Much has been said against secret diplomacy; but secrecy is, to some extent, indispensable, as will be apparent on calling to mind the nature of the duties an ambassador has to perform. If it were known that everything which was said to an English representative would be made public, we may be sure that he would learn very little which it would be of use for him to know. Even our present system of laying papers before Parliament has its disadvantages; but great care is taken in preparing papers to obviate any ill consequences to persons who give our ministers information. A comparison between our diplomatic service and that of foreign countries, as well as an examination into the political tendencies of the diplomacy of different nations, would be an interesting subject; but it is one which would take more space than we can now devote to the subject, and we will, therefore, proceed to make some remarks on the consular service.

A consul, except at a few such places as Warsaw and Venice, is essentially a commercial agent. At large ports consuls have much work to do, having to watch over all matters connected with British trade, and to settle the numerous disputes which arise between masters of vessels and their crews. An English consul has to furnish full information on all points relating to commerce; to make an annual trade report, accompanied by various returns of statistics, as well as to announce tariff changes, the prices of different articles of produce and merchandise, the rates of exchange, &c. He has also to send home copies of commercial laws and decrees, quarantine and navigation notices, and of all other public documents bearing on these questions. These reports are published from time to time by the Board of Trade. Consuls have also to perform notarial acts; to superintend British chapels and

hospitals; and to solemnise and register marriages. Consuls were originally paid by fees, which they were authorised by Act of Parliament to charge on performing duties required of them. The appointment was generally conferred on some respectable English merchant resident at the place where it was thought necessary to station a consul; and in this manner the consular establishment was a very slight burden on the country. But subsequently it was considered expedient to appoint non-trading consuls with a salary, and lately the House of Commons' Committee recommended that fees should be received on account of Government, and that consular salaries should be further increased. We fear that the desire to extend ministerial patronage had much to do with both these alterations. At certain places, which we will briefly specify, consuls should be paid, and they should receive adequate salaries; but in all other cases we do not consider that the services to be performed justify the additional burden thus laid on the tax-payers at home.

1. Places where consuls have political as well as commercial functions, such as Venice.

2. Places where consuls have to exercise magisterial and police duties, in consequence of peculiar powers vested in them by treaties with certain countries, such as China, Japan, Turkey, &c.

3. Large sea-ports, such as New York, and Marseilles, where the consul would have enough to do to attend to his official duties.

4. Places where, on account of the slave-trade, it would be inexpedient that the English consul should be mixed up with commercial affairs, such as ports in Africa, Cuba, &c.

At all other places we think it would be better if consuls were unpaid. Merchants of respectability are always to be found ready to hold the appointment, and the fees they receive (which are now very moderate) would be sufficient to defray their office expenses, postage, &c. Consuls are examined on their first appointment, and are required—

1. To show a correct knowledge of English.

2. To be able to write and speak French correctly and fluently.

3. To possess a colloquial knowledge of the language of the places they are appointed to; Italian being taken for Mediterranean, and German for Baltic ports.

4 and 5. To show a knowledge of commercial law and of arithmetic. The limit of age is twenty-five to fifty, and they are required to attend for three months at the Foreign Office to learn the forms of official business.

Such are our diplomatic and consular services. The authorities at home give

a most favourable account of their efficiency, and declare that they were never in better working order. The examination system is stated to have had already a good effect, although persons who have entered under it have not yet been placed in trying or prominent positions. Our Government appears to be served abroad quite as well as other Governments, if not better; there are in its service men of great ability; and, if promotion was guided more by real merit, and less by other considerations, we need not fear the superior skill of the diplomatists of any other nation.

# "THE FAUNA OF THE STREETS."

"And mine has been the fate of those,  
To whom the goodly sun and air  
Are banned and barred—forbidden fare."

PRISONER OF CHILLON.

THE subterranean caverns of America, caverns many miles in extent, and uncheered by the feeblest ray of light, are found, nevertheless, to be tenanted by animals of various races. These hermits cannot in strictness be described as eyeless, for in some may be traced rudimentary organs of vision, but which have, according to Mr. Darwin, become more or less absorbed pending the lapse of successive generations—who have slowly migrated from the outer world, deeper and deeper into the sunless recesses of the cavern. Some have been supposed to regain a feeble power of vision, after living for a few days in the light. But a sort of compensation for the loss of sight is found to be given, in a strange increase of supplementary instincts, and the augmented sensitiveness of other organs.<sup>1</sup>

There seems to be no good reason for restricting this kindly law to the brute creation. Had the dungeon of Bonni-

vard been his birthplace, the complaint put into his mouth by the poet, and which we have taken for our motto, would certainly have lost half its force; for where an abnormal state of existence has been the birth-lot of any creature, Nature, in pity, makes the best amends she can, or at least schools the sufferer into a patient endurance of evils, which she is powerless otherwise to control.

But for the influence of some such gentle discipline, how shall we account for the uncomplaining fortitude (greater than mere Stoic endurance) of the aborigines of the London streets, of whose lifelong condition Byron's verse is only too closely descriptive? What a study in natural history is the genuine London child, excluding, we need not say, from that term the children of those whose arrival in the West-end constitutes the vernal epoch popularly known as the "London Season." We would here be understood as confining our attention to the child of the streets, the offspring of the back alleys, courts, and slums; visible *semper et ubique*—at all times

<sup>1</sup> See Mr. Gosse's interesting account of the blind Fauna of Caverns.—*Romance of Natural History*, p. 81.

when a halfpenny can be lured from the passenger—in all places in which mud more particularly abounds, for mud is the element on which he thrives, like the Spartan on his black broth, a compound probably not very dissimilar in colour and consistency. In mud he eats, drinks, washes, plays, and sleeps; his favourite spot for a picnic appears to be the sewer. Not long ago, a band of infant brigands were discovered by the police quartered in a fastness—no other than the subterranean tunnel of the Fleet ditch, whose atmosphere would probably have killed any other living creature, the rat, perhaps, excepted.

The stranger may, within five minutes of his arrival in London, select an example for study. Say he arrives from the country by one of the southern railway termini, and would pass over Waterloo Bridge. His progress will be heralded by an apparition, which he might take for a well-grown specimen of the *Volvox globator*, or wheel insect; an acrobat, whose performances may be witnessed on the stage of the microscope—in a theatre whose drop scene is supplied by the fluid of any Metropolitan Water Company. We exclude, of course, the produce of the Thames, for the Thames at Waterloo Bridge has long been incapable of supporting the minutest form of insect life. On closer inspection, the phenomenon will resolve itself into a ragged urchin, who forms an advance guard in an extraordinary series of somersaults, revolving on his centre much as would a capital X, if possessed by the revolutionary spirit lately prevalent among our tables. Head *vice* heels, hands *vice* feet, each member interchanges both place and duty promiscuously and on the shortest notice, with a flexibility outrivalling even the Manx arms (which, by the way, consist of three *legs*), and with at least an equal title to the Manx motto, "*Stabit quocunque jeceris*," which may be freely interpreted, "Pitch him where you will he'll fall on his legs." A copper halfpenny sterling must supply the place of the golden bough as our passport across the modern Styx—a passport clearly not

producable by the tiny acrobat; and, even should you present him with a coin of that amount, its investment will not be effected in a manner likely to swell the dividends of the shareholders of the bridge.

So we part company at the turnstile—an event of less importance, from the circumstance that fresh specimens may easily be found on the other side; nay, should it be low water, there will be visible, on looking over the balustrade of the bridge, a group which forms a ghastly parody of Mr. Frith's masterly picture, "*By the Sea-side*." No rosy children playing on the sands are here! The little figures resemble rather those ghosts of infants, who first met the Trojan hero on the margin of the infernal river—

"A group of spectres weary and wan  
"With only the ghosts of garments on."

These are the mudlarks of the metropolis, though what affinity exists between the little featherless biped who, for a halfpenny, will plunge downwards head foremost into the black ooze at his feet, and the feathered one who floats upwards to Heaven's gate in a flood of song, is a problem yet unsolved. Surely, if akin to any bird, it is to the London sparrow; dirt and impudence are alike the family characteristics of both; and the very fact that any bird, albeit a London sparrow, should of its own free will haunt the streets, when by aid of wings he can attain the range of open air and wild wood, is inexplicable, save on a hypothesis like that of the author of the "*Vestiges of Creation*," that the bird will develop into a child, and is training for the change, or else on a Pythagorean supposition, that the child has already actually taken the form of the bird, with, alas! some human reminiscence of the kennel surviving to clog its wings, and fetter its flight skywards.

Yet a little farther, and, as we cross the Strand, others of the same type present themselves. Here is one whose vocation is apparently that of lord high steward of the crossing, his wand of office a ragged broom, to which the shock

head of its bearer presents a somewhat disparaging contrast. Here is another, who, promptly availing himself of the opportunity afforded by the departure of the billsticker, has stripped off a placard from the hoarding, while yet the paste is damp and reeking. The little wretch has replaced it, but only after having carefully turned it upside down; and now, standing on his *own* head, reads the contents to the passers-by, who are somewhat bewildered by the inversion of the infant Daniel and the writing which he professes to expound. The performance is, of course, concluded with the usual appeal for a "apenny;" for note that the street urchin's is no golden dream of wealth. It is invariably limited to the sum above specified, neither more nor less—"only a 'apenny."

Throughout the livelong day we shall meet him, go where we will, and (should the spectator be of a thoughtful cast) never without experiencing the somewhat mingled sensation produced by listening to a tale half humorous, half pathetic, or gazing at an actor whose performance, Robson-like, is semi-grotesque, semi-tragic. But the night advances, and, if we follow the little animal to his lair, the serious element may perchance somewhat preponderate. A visit to the Refuge in Field-lane will form no bad *frigidarium*, or mental douche, after the *tepidarium* of a crowded "at home." It may, as a Turkish bath, produce a not unhealthy reaction upon the mind *blazé* with the glare, and relaxed by the heat of the crush we have quitted in time, to arrive at the Refuge while it yet wants a few minutes of twelve. Enter, and you will witness a somewhat singular phase of the night side of street-nature. This is the resting-place of our pariah of the street—the only resting-place, save the one which awaits him when "a longer night is near."

The sleeping accommodation can hardly be termed luxurious. A rug, and a sort of counter, not very unlike that in the Morgue of Paris, on which the suicide and the murderer sleep their last sleep! A raised and sloping platform

of wood, such as is used in a guard-room for the temporary resting-place of soldiers on duty, with the difference that the one before us is partitioned off into separate cells! Each cell has now its inmate, for it is close on midnight; and here you may perchance recognise the little face which this morning grinned its quaint appeal, comic in spite of all that hunger and dirt could do to sadden it. The tiny tumbler has played his play out—the marshal of the crossing has laid aside his baton—the song of the mudlark has ended, and its dactylic refrain, "Give us à 'apenny, please sir," has sunk into silence; and there they lie, with all that is comic, merged in the awfulness of sleep—a deep sleep evidently, for it is unbroken by even that never-ceasing, hacking cough, which rings forth throughout the livelong night—a sound which proclaims, in sadder eloquence than that of words, whence the sleepers have come, and whither they are surely hastening.

No statistics of the Registrar-General, however elaborate, no testimony of Blue-books and Boards of Health, however weighty and convincing, could point the moral more strongly than that never-ceasing cough, the sound of which only dies away as we pass into the open air, absorbed, perchance, in the deep vibration of the bell of St. Paul's. Heard under these circumstances, that midnight vibration may remind us of certain realities, perhaps as important as the fact that the ball-rooms of the West are even now brimming over in a high-tide of arrivals, and glittering in the noontide of their brilliancy.

Two questions, meanwhile, have possibly crossed our mind—the first, What becomes of these children when sick? the second, What is their destiny when convalescent? As regards the first, the case of the sick child of the streets, unable to find a refuge in the hospital, is one for which kind Nature furnishes a speedy solution. To him whose acquaintance of Earth has been almost wholly derived from the mud of the streets, the announcement, "dust thou art," sounds almost a truism, and the sentence, "to



dust shalt thou return," breathes more of mercy than unkindness. And thus the ministry of the parish undertaker is in truth no ungentle one, as he consigns him to his first and last cradle, that little coffin which the creed of certain political economists would teach us to regard as the dust-bin of surplus population—the fit and proper vehicle for the removal of such-like "incumbrances."

But happily there are very many of these little ones (and as charity enlarges her bounds their number is very rapidly increasing) who, in sickness, are enabled to take shelter in one of those noble charities of which London may well be proud.

One, indeed (and would that its powers were equal to the demand for their exercise), is exclusively devoted to the care of sick children; and only those who have inspected such an asylum can form an adequate idea of the contrast which the care and tenderness lavished on its little inmates present to the destitution from which they step as they cross its threshold.<sup>1</sup>

Such as have done so, if they have been readers of "Little Dorrit," will be at no loss to understand how naturally poor Maggy, of the Marshalsea, summed up her notions of comfort in the expressive term "Hospitality," derived from her recollections as an in-patient. Now it is to those who are dismissed from these asylums as convalescent that question number two applies, with very serious importance. For, the greater the comfort of the hospital, the greater the shock to one suddenly deprived of it. Such a change and shock is just what the convalescent is peculiarly unfitted to bear.

True, the patient has been rescued from the dust! What avails it if he is preserved only to return to the mud from whence he came, and to droop, if somewhat more slowly, not the less surely! Must his lot once more sadly form a parallel with that of Bonnivard—

<sup>1</sup> This institution is situate at 49, Great Ormond-street. For a description of it and its inmates the reader is referred to an admirable article in *Household Words*, April, 1852.

"And, when I did descend again,  
The darkness of my dim abode  
Fell on me as a heavy load—  
It was as is a new-dug grave  
Closing on one we sought to save."

Is there no alternative, no remedy, no means of preventing the unravelling of so noble a piece of work so nearly brought to a successful completion? Truly the remedy is so simple, so inexpensive, that it is only marvellous to learn that it has been but recently adopted, and, from the limited acquaintance of the public with its existence, on a scale correspondingly limited. Had you, O reader, to prescribe for the darling of your own nursery just recovered from sickness, would it not be in three words—"change of air?"

In the case of the child of the streets, the necessity and craving for this "breath of life" can hardly be overstated. Who can fail to sympathise with the longing of the dying boy, who, on hearing the description of the city "whose gates are of pearl, and the pavement of fine gold," meekly expressed the hope that he should be allowed to go into the beautiful country about it, for he was "a'most tired of biding in the streets?" What wonder that one who life-long had been pent up in the narrow alley he was at last about to quit should yearn after the Plains of Heaven,<sup>1</sup> and that, even as the starving are wont to dream of feast, his glazing eye should be haunted by visions of that bright country described in the "sweet song of St. Augustine"—

"Flos perpetuus rosarum ver agit perpetuum,  
Candent lilia, rubescit crocus, sudat balsamum,  
Virent prata, vernant sata, rivi mellis influunt,  
Pigmentorum spirat odor, liquor et aromatum,  
Pendent floridorum non lapsura nemorum,  
Non alternat Luna vices, Sol vel cursus syderum,

<sup>1</sup> The last work of the painter Martin, on which he was engaged just before his death.



*Agnus est felicitis urbis lumen innotiduum."*

Now, cannot we do something to meet this craving for fresh air, which, as it is the last instinct of the dying, is also the first and most natural instinct of the convalescent? Take a map of London and its environs, and you will by a short survey convince yourself that the neighbourhood of few of our large towns is supplied with better and purer air. Its immediate suburbs for miles and miles form one vast nursery garden. These, again, are circled with a golden belt of commons, yellow throughout the greater part of the year with the ever-blooming furze. Yet a little farther, and you will find a breezy range of downs, purple with heather, and fragrant with bee-haunted thyme, the emerald of their velvet carpet thick studded with the darker green boss of the juniper. Nay, within a dozen years the black cock has actually been sprung within sight of the golden cross of St. Paul's.<sup>1</sup> Throughout all this tract of country, in pure air and the undimmed light of the sun, is freely proffered God's own medicine to the convalescent—a medicine doubly potent in the case of those to whom these elements have been hitherto "forbidden fare."

There is a certain old farmhouse on the margin of one of these seas of furzy gold, within but an hour's drive from the very heart of London; the railway will transport you to it in half the time. Its locality is Mitcham, and the visitor will have no difficulty in finding it, on asking the way to Rumbold's farm. There may be witnessed a practical experiment, worked by the simple common-sense of one in whose benevolent efforts many will surely be thankful to become sharers. "She has done what she could," and the result of her efforts will be best appreciated by an inspection of this asylum for convalescent

children. It is an old farmhouse, which, at much expense in the requisite alterations, has been thoroughly adapted for the purpose it now fulfils. An able military authority has lately recommended the site for defences of a very different kind—a fort for the protection of London. And yet this, too, may fulfil a like office against a foe which attacks a class most defenceless, and the cost—how trifling compared with that of our military estimates! The price of a single Armstrong gun would double the efficiency of this asylum, and defray its working expenses for an entire year. Or, to vary the terms of our calculations, the rent of three feet of space during some four or five hours, in the form of an opera stall, would suffice to restore a feeble little brother to health: it would cost as much to bury him!

Of the entire success of the experiment the reader would do well to satisfy himself by personal inspection rather than from a necessarily imperfect description. The matron of the establishment, herself the personification of health, cheerfulness, and tidiness, will proudly point to the difference, visible at a glance, between the looks of the new comer and of one who has sojourned, though only for a few days, under her care. The most heedless will be struck by the wonders worked through the agency of the fresh breeze of the common, and the liberal though simple diet by which it is aided.

The entire place, indeed, breathes a healthy atmosphere, one in which the feeble and neglected may, perhaps, for the first time, learn that he has brothers who care for him on earth, for the sake of Him whom we all in common address as Our Father in Heaven. And surely the blessing promised to the giver of the cup of cold water will not be wanting to those who minister the life-draught of pure air to the least of these little ones, of whom it is recorded "that it is not His will that one of these should perish."

<sup>1</sup> On Leith Hill, in Surrey, where it may possibly still be found.

## BRITAIN'S EARNST-MONEY FOR THE PROVINCES WHICH SAVED HER INDIAN EMPIRE IN THE MUTINY.

### A STORY OF MOOLTAN.

It is little more than twelve years since the British officers then acting for the young Maharaja Dulleep Sing, of Lahore, sent envoys to Mooltan to effect the transfer of its proconsulate from the Dewan Moolraj to a more trustworthy ruler.

Those envoys were Patrick Vans Agnew, of the Bengal Civil Service, and Lieutenant Anderson, of the 1st Bombay Fusiliers.

The momentous events which have crowded our history since that time make the episode of their murders appear like some incident long passed away, while the high-souled endurance which, in their case, elicited the involuntary admiration of men of another colour, and other sympathies, has been repeated in infinite phases during the late great Indian mutiny, telling a nobler tale of devotion and duty than had ever yet been heard in any nation's history, and illustrating at least one argument of the following attempt to recall and represent their services—that there is a purer heroism in the calm and enduring valour of English men and women, like those of Cawnpore and Lucknow, of Bandah and Hissar, of Jhansi and Shajehanpore, of many unrecorded stations, than any ancient or modern feat of fighting performed in the intoxication of action.

But Britain, unfortunately, cares little for dead heroes. Her monuments, even on the field of Waterloo (till last year only), were to persons who survived the battle; while the Germans, both there and in the capitals, built their monuments to those who died.

It would surely be an encouragement to men so perilously placed by their duty to their country as those whose fate we have attempted to represent, if they could feel confident that their deaths

would not obliterate the debt of gratitude due to their devotion—that their friends and family at home would hear of them from their countrymen, and the guerdon of honour be scrupulously paid by Government to those who, in the performance of their glorious duty, succeeded in all but saving their own lives.

This account was written soon after Agnew and Anderson died, and in Britain little or nothing is now known or heard of them; but the exile in India, at the scene of their deaths, may find the following inscription on an obelisk over their graves:—

“BENEATH THIS MONUMENT  
lie the remains of  
PATRICK ALEXANDER VANS AGNEW,  
*Of the Bengal Civil Service,*  
and  
WILLIAM ANDERSON,  
*Lieutenant, 1st Bombay Fusilier Regiment,*  
Assistants to the Resident at Lahore,  
Who, being deputed by the Government to relieve, at  
his own request,  
Dewan Moolraj, Viceroy of Mooltan,  
Of the Fortress and authority which he held,  
were attacked and wounded by the Garrison  
on the 19th April, 1848,  
And, being treacherously deserted by the Sikh Escort,  
were on the following day,  
In flagrant breach of National Faith and Hospitality,  
barbarously murdered  
In the Eedgah, under the Walls of Mooltan.  
Thus fell these two young public servants,  
At the ages of 25 and 28 years,  
Full of high hopes, rare talents, and promise of future  
usefulness;  
Even in their deaths doing their country honor.  
Wounded and forsaken, they could offer no resistance,  
but hand in hand calmly awaited the onset  
of their assailants.  
Nobly they refused to yield,  
Foretelling the day when thousands of Englishmen  
Should come to avenge their death  
And destroy Moolraj, his army and fortress.  
History records how the prediction was fulfilled.  
Borne to their grave by their victorious brother soldiers  
and countrymen, they were buried with  
military honours  
Here, on the summit of the captured citadel,  
On the 26th January, 1849.  
The annexation of the Punjab to the British Empire,  
was the result of the War  
Of which their assassination was the commencement.”

All honour to Herbert Edwardes, and  
his companions, who paid such a tribute  
to their memory !

They sing the deeds of olden days,  
When first the silken fold  
Of Britain's royal banner gained  
Its blazoning of gold ;  
They tell us we've inherited  
A great and glorious name  
From iron-belted sires of yore,  
Who founded England's fame ;  
And we hear of deeds of daring,  
Seeming more than mortal might,  
Done with boiling blood of battle  
Midst the fever of the fight,  
Like levin bolts illumining  
The gloomy storm of war ;  
Such deeds too story India's plains  
From Ava to Lahore.  
And are we then degenerate,  
Are our hearts not as bold ?  
Find we no hand to grasp the brand  
Our fathers held of old ?

Now, brothers, learn of bearing bold  
As ever yet was shown,  
Since those olden days of glory,  
Since our blazoned flag has flown.  
Ah, would 'twere mine to tell it,  
So that endless years to come  
It would stir our hero spirit  
Like the reveille of the drum !  
Ah, would 'twere mine to tell it,  
So that every hamlet, town,  
Every fertile glade of England,  
Should hear of its renown !  
And would that I could tell it  
As its history should be told,  
So 'twould fire the young for honour,  
So 'twould renovate the old !

Have you seen the Ocean sleeping  
On a quiet summer's day,  
And the tall ships scarcely cleaving  
The waters of the bay—  
All nature resting tranquilly,  
All danger far away ?  
Have you known the distant rising  
Of some dark and spreading cloud ?  
Then breezy gusts come rippling by ;  
Then a wind that moans aloud ;  
Soon the sullen roll of thunder,  
Levin lights across the sky,  
And whitening sheets of driving foam

As the tempest wind sweeps by.  
Near the Chenaub's silent river  
See an eastern city rise,  
And its citadel lies basking  
'Neath the burning eastern skies ;  
With embrasures sternly frowning  
As a fortress-strength should be ;  
But yon city resting tranquilly  
As sleeps the summer sea.  
Lo ! along its widest causeway  
Comes a gallant cavalcade  
Of horsemen decked in cloth of gold,  
And silks of every shade.  
They gaily guide that human tide,  
These warriors of Ind,  
Their crined and brodered ensigns  
Free fluttering in the wind ;  
And shirts of mail, and casques of steel,  
Are gleaming in the sun,  
Their harness plates and corselets  
All ringing as they run.  
A little band of spearmen, too,  
All travel-worn appear,  
Who bear St. George's ensign  
O'er their motley Indian gear,  
While Sikhs and Moslems swell the  
crowd,  
From camp and temple near.

Now, "by the hope of our Christian  
faith,"  
And the Norman "name we bear,"  
Has seldom been a stranger scene  
Than shows before us there :  
A pair of Europe's fair-browed sons,  
Amidst that swarthy throng,  
In the simple garb of England  
Pass fearlessly along—  
All fearless and all proudly,  
Yet with fixed and thoughtful eye ;  
We meet no shitting glance in youths  
Schooled in responsibility.

They scorn to heed the lowering looks,  
Their swart companions show,  
Nor seem to hear the muttered curse  
Which follows where they go.  
In the magic might of England,  
In a name the world wide known,  
They wander 'midst a hostile crowd,  
Nigh armless and alone.  
They bring in truth a khalsa guard,  
A band of conquered foes,  
Whose swords retain the blood-rust  
stain

Of Moodkee and Feroz ;  
As though they'd seized a grisly boar,  
First tamed his rage, and then  
Had led him forth to be their guard,  
And face the lion's den.

Full fiercely does the Indian vaunt ;  
Full hardly does he seem  
Where'er no British drums are heard,  
No British bayonets gleam.  
What wonder that the muttered curse  
Should louder accents find ?  
We mark the cloud, the rising breeze,  
The sadly-moaning wind.  
Then sudden as the thunder-clap,  
Or ripple on the tide,  
With eager, startled gaze the crowd  
Throngs round on every side.  
Some sudden and untoward chance  
Seems fallen on them there ;  
Strange broken cries of fear and hate  
Come borne along the air.  
In surging waves yon angry crowd  
Is tossing to and fro,  
While through the streets that tumult-  
storm  
Does sterner, wilder grow.  
Then shining blades and coward knives  
On every side are bared,  
As though to meet some armed host  
Their weapons were prepared.  
Oh, highly swells the courage  
Of the braggart Indian then,  
With sword and spear, with shout and  
cheer,  
Against two fenceless men.

Were five to one the odds they meet,  
And they, too, sword in hand,  
The spirit of their sires might crown  
With laurel-wreaths their brand.  
But what avails that Wallace-blood  
Which flows in Agnew's veins ?  
What worth the Anglo-Saxon nerve  
Which English calm sustains ?  
For onward like the tidal-wave  
Their wild assailants throng,  
And those who lead by after crowds  
Are driven fast along,  
As melting snows and autumn rain  
Drive th' Indus' swollen flood,  
Till Mooltan streets are crimson-stained  
With Europe's knightly blood.

All slowly and all solemnly,  
Like some sad funeral train,  
Pass those who bear our envoys  
Back to their tents again.  
With bodies weak and bleeding,  
But with souls yet undismayed,  
Pass the youths we saw so lately  
'Midst that joyous cavalcade.  
Yet the pageant of the morning  
Scarce had lived beyond the noon ;  
It had risen like the rainbow cloud  
And passed away as soon ;  
But this seeming sad returning,  
All Christendom may own  
To yield, I gage, the proudest page  
In India's annals known !

As the weary beat of billows,  
Sounding ever drear and dull ;  
As the sighing winds of ocean,  
When the storm begins to lull ;  
So a ceaseless hum of voices,  
From the crowds within the town,  
Yield a sorrow-sounding cadence  
Till at last the sun goes down.  
Then again the tumult rises,  
As the wild winds again  
With fiercer might in reckless flight  
To sweep across the main.

Now where are they whose funeral knell  
Is rung by the tumult there ?  
Do they read aright the lurid light  
Which its crested breakers bear ?  
Oh, they bide together as brethren  
should

For the fate they meet that day ;  
And they speak together in kindly tones  
Of those that are far away ;  
And they kneel for the hope of their  
Christian faith

As they knelt by a mother's knee—  
'Tis the selfsame prayer they whisper  
there

Where they kneel 'neath the tamarind tree.  
They seek for no help of the souls to be  
shriven,  
Save the grace that from Calvary  
smiled ;  
Nor need they for shrift of a hero's  
death

But the prayer of an English child.

Ah ! gaily day dawns on a far-off scene  
Where their memory carries them  
now ;

That sun which is setting for their last  
day,

And shedding its lurid glow  
On dusty plain and heated town,  
And bathes in gold as 'tis sinking  
down

Each minaret tower and dome,  
Is rising in streams of joyous light  
O'er misty wold and moorland bright,  
O'er the meadow fields of home.

That force which can scatter the shades  
of time

Clears the mists from years gone by ;  
And the scenes of a life crowd round  
them again,

Round the pallet where bleeding they  
lie.

Then like enchantment, broken

By some unearthly spell,  
Wild forms, and wilder voices

Fill the "Eedgah" where they dwell.  
And a darkening circle hems them round ;

No help or hope of freedom shows,  
Save one clear path above them,  
Which no earthly power can close.

Britain's envoys hold high audience  
Of a strange and solemn kind,  
Looking dauntlessly for severance  
Of the body and the mind.

Then fearless spoke Vans Agnew,

While before his flashing eye  
A moment quail'd the rabble rout  
That came to see him die.

"'Tis well," he said ; " I hail the sign

That ye, with your own hand,  
Should use the stain of Saxon blood  
To redden this fair land ;

It has been said the Saxon red

Will cover India o'er,  
That India's chart shall need to trace  
Its native States no more.

And we, the least of England's sons,  
May gladly die to claim

Fresh conquests for our country—  
Fresh honour for our name.

But we die not unremembered,  
And not unrevenged we die,  
For our brothers here in thousands  
Will seek us where we lie.  
The storm of Britain's iron hail  
Will sweep your city round,  
And soon her dread artillery  
Will raze it with the ground."

What wonder an they trembled  
At the stern reply he gave,  
Or deem'd the light of prophecy  
Shone on him from the grave ?  
For many a father thought, I ween,  
When that proud speech was done,  
" I would yon Kaffir's lion heart  
Was placed within my son !"

Ah ! hide the fearful vision  
Which opens to us now ;  
Hide their fiendish scowls of triumph ;  
Veil his calm and fearless brow !  
But all sickening sounds of horror  
Still echo through the air ;  
A craven mob that cries for blood,  
And none to reason there !  
Oh, the leaden sound of murderous  
blows ;  
The proudly stifled cry !  
Oh, the fearful sweep of sabres ;  
The shudder and the sigh !  
Then the spirit all unconquered  
Has no partner left to die.

Lying wounded and forsaken,  
Lying " face to face with death,"  
Yet upholding Britain's honour  
Till life's last ebbing breath,  
Far from sympathy or succour,  
With no fond friends standing by,  
But all frowning eyes around them,  
Did our martyred heroes die.

What aching hearts may bleed for them  
Let other annals say ;  
What happy British hearths may turn  
As hapless from to-day.  
Do mothers live to mourn their sons  
As only mothers may ?  
Will gentle sisters weep for them  
In their homes far, far away ?

R. H. W. D.

## THE ASHEN FAGGOT.

A TALE FOR CHRISTMAS.

BY THOMAS HUGHES, AUTHOR OF "TOM BROWN AT OXFORD," &amp;c.

## CHAPTER I.

At about four o'clock on Christmas Eve, a year for two back, two men trudged briskly up the little village-street of Lilburne, in the county of Wilts. They were both dressed in rough shooting suits, and one carried a common game-bag, and the other a knapsack. Each of them had a stout stick in his hand. The elder, who might be six or seven and twenty, wore a strong reddish brown beard. The rest of his rather broad face was well tanned by exposure to weather; he had a clear, merry grey eye, and an air of very British self-reliance about him. The younger, in his twentieth year, or thereabouts, wore also as much beard as nature had yet bestowed on him, and was tanned a ruddy brown. He was darker than his companion, and his complexion would have been sallow, but for the work of sun and air on it. There was the possibility of great nervous irritability and excitableness in the look of him; but this natural tendency of his constitution and temperament seemed, at least for the present, to be counteracted by robust health.

The two stopped at the door of "The Waggoner's Rest," the only public-house of Lilburne village.

"Well, here we are then, at the last stage. How much further do you say it is?"

"Just six miles."

"I'm never quite at ease about your arithmetic, Johnny. Hullo here. House! landlord! who's at home here?" and he gave a thump or two on the door-post, which brought mine host out with a run.

"How far do you call it to Avenly, landlord?"

"A matter o' seven miles, sir."

"There, you see, Herbert, I wasn't far wrong," said the younger.

"A mile out, Johnny—never mind. Now what do you say? shall we push on at once, or stop and feed?"

"What should you like?"

"That has nothing to say to it. You're in command, you know, since this morning."

"Well, I shouldn't like to be there very early. I'm sure you would feel yourself—"

"Then we call a halt," interrupted the elder, leading the way into the house; "this cold air of yours has given me a deuce of an appetite. Now, landlord, what can we have to eat, directly? Some cold meat, or whatever you can give us at once. Mind, sharp's the word! Or, never mind, no, you go and draw us some of your best tap. You'll help us, ma'am, I can see, about the eatables, and I'm sure we couldn't be in better hands."

This speech, begun in the street, ended in the tiny bar of "The Waggoner's Rest," in which the hostess stood, a tidy well-looking woman, in Sunday cap and ribbons, donned in honour of the season, and of the rush of guests whom she was expecting as the day wore on.

She was flattered by the compliment of her off-hand guest, who clearly was not in the habit of letting the grass grow on his own heels, or on those of any one else with whom he had to do. He had sent her bustling off in a minute or two to cook rashers of bacon on toast, and to run round to the yard in the forlorn hope that one of the hens might have so forgotten herself as to lay in such weather, in that cold, dark little stable of "The Waggoner's Rest." Meanwhile, he had taken possession of the bar, heaped up the fire, seated his companion opposite



to him, and, by the time the landlord arrived with a jug of his best ale, was as much at home as if he had been in the habit of taking his meals there once a week for the last ten years.

"I'm afraid you'll find it a leetle chilly, gentlemen," said the landlord, as he placed the jug and glasses on the table; "the cellar ain't altogether as warm as it should be."

"Oh, never fear! We shall warm your ale fast enough, I've no doubt. Home-brewed, eh?"

"Ees, whoam-brewed, sir; I does the maltin' for all the farmers round. 'Tis raal malt and hops, I assure 'ee."

"That's all right then. Yes, that has the right smack," he went on, pouring out a glass and taking it off, "fine and bright and wholesome tackle. We haven't tasted such ale this many a day, have we, Johnny? But, as you say, a little chilled; so we'll put it on the hob till the rashers come. Real old Christmas weather this, eh, landlord?"

"Ah, 'tis, sir."

"And when does your mail-cart come by?"

"At eight o'clock, sir."

"Well, the driver will bring our traps, and there is a carrier from this to Avenly, isn't there?"

"Ees, sir."

"Does he live here?"

"Just athert the street, sir."

"Then I should like to see him. You can send over for him presently. Ah, here come the rashers. They look splendid, ma'am. But no eggs!"

"Well, sir, you see as our hens gets no het about the place. My master don't kep no beastesses. There's no 'commodation for 'em here—and I tells 'un th' hens wunt lay without het."

"Never mind, ma'am; the hens are quite right. We shall do famously with that splendid loaf and the cheese. Here, Johnny, hold your plate. We're not turning you out, ma'am? Pray don't go, don't mind us."

The landlady protested that they were quite welcome to the bar, and soon followed her husband, leaving them alone to their meal, to which they pro-

ceeded to do ample justice. The worthy pair were soon discussing their guests with one or two village gossips, who had already arrived in the kitchen—amongst them the village carrier.

The travellers lost no time over their food. The landlady was summoned, complimented, and paid, and came out of her bar again very favourably impressed with the strangers. In another minute they were in the kitchen amongst the circle of the Lilburne *quidnuncs*, ready for the road. The elder made the necessary arrangement with the carrier to bring on their luggage, and then, after shaking hands with the curtseying landlady, they sallied out into the street, accompanied to the door by the landlord and several of the men. The daylight was fast slipping away. The air was perfectly still and hushed, but a dull heavy curtain of cloud had settled on the village, from which every now and then a crisp flake or two of snow came floating gently down.

"We sha'n't have much light for our walk, Johnny. You're sure about the road?"

"I should think so. Besides, there is no turn in it, except the one at the end of the village, on to the downs."

"Very good. You are pilot. It's a straight road to Avenly, eh?" he added, turning to the carrier.

"Ees; but 'tis a unked road to kep to in a vall, is the downs road," replied the carrier, "by reason as there ain't no hedges, and sech like, to go by."

"You think we're going to have a fall, then?"

"It hev looked like nothin' else aal day."

"Then we must make the most of the daylight. The moon will be up in an hour."

"Ees; but her'll kep t'other side o' th' fall, zur."

"Small blame to her. Well, good night."

A chorus of "Good nights" from the cónclave at the door of "The Waggoner's Rest" followed the two travellers, as they strode away down the village-street. Before they were out of sight, the snow

began to fall in earnest. The villagers stood gaping after them. Such an event was to them as good as a war telegram to their kindred circles in the neighbourhood of St. James's.

"Be 'em gen'l'volk, now, zould 'ee zay?" asked the blacksmith, taking his pipe from his mouth.

"Gen'l'volk! Wut bist thenkin' ov?" replied the carrier.

"Wut, dostn't thenk so? I'ze warn'd 'em for gen'l'volk, that I 'ool," put in the landlord. "Wut dost take 'em for, then?"

"Zummat in th' engineerin' line, or contractor chaps, med be."

"Noa, noa! Thaay be too pleasant-spoken, and don't give no trouble."

"But wut dost zaay to them ther' girt beards? And th' clothes on 'em like zacks, and mwaoast as coarse?"

The beard movement, and modern habits of dress, had not yet penetrated to Lilburne. The carrier's last remark seemed to puzzle the landlord, more or less.

"Wut dost zaay, Muster Gabbet?" he said, turning to one of the circle, who had not yet spoken; "be 'em gen'l'volk, or bean't 'em?"

The person appealed to had been a groom in his youth, who had seen "Lunnon," and other distant countries. He kept a pony, too, on which he frequented all neighbouring meets of hounds, and other sporting gatherings, and was considered a great authority by the Lilburne coterie on any matter involving knowledge of life. From his contact with the outer world, the edges of his accent had been rubbed off. He was a man of few and weighty words.

"Gentlemen, to be sure," replied Mr. Gabbet.

"I told 'ee zo," said the landlord triumphantly, turning to the carrier.

"Wi' beards like bottle-brushes! haw, haw!" rejoined that worthy, by no means discomfited.

"That's no odds," replied Mr. Gabbet. "Last coursin' meetin' ther' was half th' young squires wi' beards."

"And wi' duds on 'em, like galley-crows, I s'poses! haw, haw!" said the incredulous carrier.

"What dost go on laafin' for, thee girt gawney?" said the landlord; "that's how th' gen'l'volk do dress now-a-days, bean't it, Mr. Gabbet? Ther' wur young Squire Mundell passed here only last week, dressed noways different from thaay; only he'd a got zhart wide breeches, and red striped stockings, he had, and martal queer a did look."

"They calls them dresses nick-and-nockers," said Mr. Gabbet, gravely.

"Nockers or no, I dwon't call 'em gen'l'volk," persisted the incorrigible carrier.

"Thee'st as cam as a peg. 'Taint a mossel o' use to talk sense to th'."

At this point of the dialogue the objects of the conversation took the turn towards the downs, and disappeared, and Mr. Gabbet retired suddenly into the house. He was followed at once by the rest, and the knotty question was adjourned to the chimney-corner, where it furnished talk for the rest of the evening, and caused the consumption of several extra mugs of beer.

## CHAPTER II.

THE little hamlet of Avenly is dropped, as it were, in a dip of the downs, many miles from anything approaching to a town. It consists of a miniature church, and neat parsonage-house and garden; the manor-house and curtilage, which we must look at more closely presently; one public-house; two or three general shops in a very small way, one of which is the post-office; and a dozen or two thatched cottages. These are scattered prettily enough by the side of the road from Lilburne to Devizes, or of the little clear brook, which runs parallel to the road through the hamlet, between the church and the manor-house.

There are three or four clumps of fine ashes and elms in or near the hamlet, of which the biggest is the rookery at the end of the manor-garden. There is also timber in the fences of the few inclosures, one of which inclosures is a fine orchard, and there are fruit-trees in most of the cottage-gardens.

Where the hamlet stands, the dip is not half a mile across ; it is narrower yet above, and widens below. The downs encircle the place on all sides. Except within the inclosures, not a tree is to be seen ; and the contrast is what gives its peculiar charm to the little out-of-the-way place, as it lies there in the lap of the great brown bare downs, rejoicing in its own shade and verdure. The first glance from the brow above, as you come upon it either from the Lilburne or the Devizes side, shows you at once the character of the place. It has the special characteristics of the old manor—the big house in the middle, the little copyhold tenements clustering about it, and around a sea of common lands ; not that the lands are copyhold, but the manor-house is so completely the centre of the little community, that one could easily fancy the little people about holding their allotments still by suit and service—as indeed they do, for almost all of them are employed by the owner of the manor-house.

The manor-house itself is one in which the first impression you get on entering, and the last which remains with you after you leave, will most likely be that here, if anywhere in the world, there is no lack of anything.

There is no lack of room. The house is a great, old-fashioned, rambling brick and flint building, with more rooms than anybody can possibly want who is ever likely to live there, and not the sort of little useless rooms which one often sees in country houses, but good large twenty-foot-by-fifteen places, where a dozen children might romp on a wet day. The outhouses, which have been built up by successive generations of wealthy tillers of the soil, each of whom has had some special fancy in the matter of stables, brewhouses, granaries, or barns, are various, solid, and quaint. They surround a yard which covers half an acre of ground, paved with flint round two of the sides to a breadth of some twelve feet, but otherwise soft-bottomed and full of straw, in which fat heifers stand over their hocks, and munch out of the racks which are set

up at several points and constantly replenished, and saucy calves disport themselves, and bully the younger generations of small-limbed, fat-sided black pigs, their fellow-occupants. There is animal life of all kinds, representatives of every species of domestic beast or fowl which can be used either for profit or pleasure. There is no lack of dead stock—dozens of hay-ricks and corn-stacks, thatched mounds full of mangold-wurzel, and turnips, and potatoes, besides well-stored barns and granaries ; a dozen ploughs, eight or ten waggons, carts, a light carriage or two, and a steam-engine.

And, lastly, there is no lack of human stock to crown the whole ; jolter-headed plough-boys and carter-boys, and farm-servants and house-servants, and “the family,” with whom we are chiefly concerned. The head of these, and feudal king and lord paramount of the little hamlet of Avenly, is Farmer John Kendrick, as he would call himself—Squire Kendrick, as the peasantry all around call him. He is the fourth or fifth in descent of his family, who have owned a considerable tract of land in the dip of the downs in which Avenly lies ; and, besides his own land, he farms a great tract of the downs on lease. In fact, he pays more than four-fifths of the tithes and rates of the parish himself, and employs all but some dozen or so of the whole male population. He is, at the time of our story, a hale man of about forty-three, a good sportsman, and an energetic and successful farmer, reasonably well educated, and open-minded, of good plain manners, without much polish. He has no near neighbours, except his parson, and no spare time to go far a-field for society ; so that he sees little of it. A just and a kind man, but hot-tempered and somewhat arbitrary, from having had his own way since he was a boy of nineteen, when his father died. He married early the daughter of a clergyman's widow, a lady of education and refinement, whom, nevertheless, he had managed to make very happy, and who had borne him a large family.

On the morning of the Christmas-Eve with which we are concerned, Mrs. Kendrick is making tea in the south parlour of the manor, at a long table, while her eldest daughter Mabel, a girl of eighteen, is cutting large plates of bread-and-butter, and filling mugs with new milk for the younger branches. Presently the bell rings for prayers, and the governess with her convoy arrive at one door, while two schoolboys of fifteen and fourteen, and a small boy of nine—proud of having been out with his big brothers—come in with rosy cheeks from the hall.

"You can call the servants in, Willie," said Mrs. Kendrick to the eldest boy, as soon as she had returned all their salutes; "we are not to wait for papa."

After prayers, the serious business of breakfast began, amidst a babel of talk from the boys.

"Haven't we had a jolly morning, mamma? Parker's pond is frozen over splendidly, and we've been sliding ever since it was light."

"And I can do butter-and-eggs all down the long slide, which the carter boys have made, can't I, Willie?" (The feat of butter-and-eggs, be it known to those readers who are not up to the higher mysteries of sliding, consists in going down the slide on one foot, and beating with the heel and toe of the other at short intervals.)

"Yes, and Bobby is getting on famously, and goes at the slide like a little dragon," said Willie. Bobby, the small boy of eleven, looked up proudly at his mother, with his mouth too full of bread-and-butter to be able to take his own part by speech at the moment.

"Bobby hasn't learnt a word of his lessons though," said a staid little girl of twelve, looking up from her milk; "and Miss Smith says he'll have to stay in after breakfast to do them."

"That's just like you now, Clara," retorted Dick, the butter-and-eggs boy; "why can't you mind your own lessons, and let Bobby alone?"

"But, Bobby, how did you get out so early?" asked Mrs. Kendrick.

"Oh, Willie came in and told me I might get up and come with them."

"Yes, mamma, and I'm sure it will do him good to be out with us, instead of being with the girls. He needn't do lessons, need he, just at Christmas time?"

"Well, dear, Bobby shall have a holiday, and may go with you. But you must take care of him, for he's only a little fellow, remember."

"Oh, yes, that we will."

"Mayn't I have some cold beef, mamma?" broke in Dick, and, permission being given, he and Willie helped themselves at the sideboard, and kept the conversation alive with accounts of the game of hockey they were going to have with the carter boys, who were to break off work at twelve, and the rat-catching which was to come off in the big barn in the afternoon.

"And to-night is Ashen Faggot night, isn't it, mamma? and you'll let us all go, and you and papa will come? You didn't go in last year; and I heard Joe, the head carter, say it wasn't like Ashen Faggot if master and mistress didn't come in."

A shade passed over Mrs. Kendrick's face, but she said quietly, "Perhaps your papa will look in, dear; and, at any rate, you can all go for an hour or two."

"And, oh, mamma, shall we see the mummers?" asked a little bright-eyed girl of eight.

"Most likely, Maggy. They are sure to come, I think."

"But where's papa? Why doesn't he come to breakfast?"

"He has ridden out. He will come down and see you sliding after breakfast, I'm sure."

"Do you think I might take his skates? Dick wants to begin, and I could lend him mine if I may have papa's."

"Yes, certainly, dear. I'm sure papa would wish you to have them."

"But, Willie," interrupted Dick, "there's that pair of smaller ones, hanging up by papa's; they would fit you better, you know. What's the matter?"

Why do you kick me under the table?"

Willie answered by a frown at his brother, and then glanced up hastily at his mother, who had bent down over her tea-cup. Mabel, who had been watching her mother since the mention of the Ashen Faggot, got up quickly, saying—

"Oh, there's papa; I'm sure I heard his horse. Let us go and bring him in."

The breakfast circle broke up at once. Willie lingered, looking at his mother, who looked up presently, and said—

"You can take papa's skates, dear, but you mustn't have the other pair."

"Of course, dear mother, I know," he said, going up to her fondly. And she kissed him, and he pressed her hand, and then went off after his brothers. Mabel came back with her father, and took out some embroidery-work, and sat by him, while Mrs. Kendrick poured out his tea. Each of them made some efforts to talk, but they were failures, and John Kendrick finished his breakfast in silence. When he had done, he got up and walked to one of the windows and looked out, and his wife came and put her hand on his shoulder. He took her other hand in his, and said—

"It was selfish of me to leave you this morning, dear, but I couldn't have borne the children's merry prattle so early. I shall be better before dinner-time. What are the boys doing?"

"They have gone down to the pond, dear, full of all their plans. They are very happy. Shall we dine alone—just you, I, and Mabel?"

"No, no! I must face it. It's only just to-day. One must make home cheerful to them in their holidays."

"Indeed, dear John, they are very happy; are not they, Mabel?"

"Yes really, papa; and Willie is so thoughtful and nice."

"He's a fine character, thank God," said Mr. Kendrick; and then, after a minute's pause, he went on: "Only to have written those three lines all this time. For myself, I shouldn't wonder, but the cruelty of such silence to you—to Mabel—"

"But, dearest John, remember they were written on board ship. He may never have had a chance of writing again."

"God knows, dearest. A cold heart, I fear."

"Oh, no, papa. Indeed you wrong him. He was wild and headstrong, but never cold or cruel."

"I would give all I am worth to be sure of it, Mabel. Come, come, we must bear it as we may. Shall we walk out presently, dear? I want to go to the bailiff's cottage, and to call at old Jacob Eagleton's. His wife's ill again; we can carry her some wine, and take the pond on the way home, and see the boys slide."

"In half an hour, dear?"

"Yes. You and Mabel will call for me, then, in my room."

John Kendrick went to his study, and sat down before his library table, and looked for five minutes absently across the room and out of the window; a most unwonted thing for him. Then he roused himself with a start and a sigh, and took a small bundle of letters and papers, chiefly bills, out of a drawer of his library table. The letters were in a schoolboy hand. He read them through, tied up the packet, and put them back, and then went and unlocked a cupboard, and was looking at a cap, a riding-whip, and cricket bat, and other articles of dress and sport which it contained, when he heard his wife's step. He shut and locked the door of the cupboard, and turned to meet her and Mabel.

"Here we are, dear, ready for our walk, and here's the post-bag."

John Kendrick took it and unlocked it, turning the contents on to his table. A couple of papers and half a dozen letters fell out. He took up the first, and was reading it, when his wife broke out—

"Oh, John, look here! what is this?"

She held out to him a soiled letter, with a strange stamp on it. He took it, looked at it for a moment, tore it open with a trembling hand, and glanced through it, and then, hanging it to his

wife, leant forward on the table, burying his face in his hands.

Mabel read eagerly over her mother's shoulder, glancing rapidly from the page to the loved face, out of which the look of repressed sorrow which had haunted it for more than a year was passing, while tears ran down her cheeks, and hindered her from reading. But, as she finished, she stooped, and threw her arm round her husband's neck and said—

"John, God has been very good to us to-day. This day, too, of all others."

Mr. Kendrick squeezed his wife's hand, and then got up and took two or three turns about the room, while his wife and daughter still pored over the letter.

"He is alive, at any rate, and well, and earning his bread honestly. But why couldn't he have written before? Why doesn't he write himself now?"

"Oh, John, I can quite understand. It was so natural that he should get this friend to write for him."

"What's the name?"

"The signature is H. Upton. What can we do to thank him?"

"What is the date of the letter? Let me see the envelope. Why, how can it have been so long? The post-mark is July 22d."

"Is it longer than it should have been?"

"Yes, the regular mail comes in less than three months."

"Three months, papa! what a dreadful distance!" said Mabel; "we may write to him at once, now that we know where he is, to tell him to come home, mayn't we?"

"Well, we will think it over, Mabe. Perhaps he is better where he is."

"Poor boy, I wonder how he will spend this Christmas?"

Jacob Eagleton's wife got a double allowance of wine that morning when Mr. and Mrs. Kendrick and their daughter visited her.

"Wutever can be cum to the squire and missis?" the old woman muttered, as they left her; "thaay hen't looked so

cheerful, not scarce since 'em wur married."

Every one who met them in their walk made some remark of the same kind.

### CHAPTER III.

"WHAT did that old fellow call this road of yours, Johnny?" asked the elder of our two travellers, giving his shoulders a shake, which sent an accumulation of an inch or so of snow off them.

"A unked road to kep in a vall," answered Johnny, imitating the carrier's accent.

"By Jove, he's right! How it does come down! I had almost forgotten what snow was like, though I rather enjoy it."

"It must have been snowing up here for hours. Look how deep it is. Four or five inches at least, already."

"Whereabouts are we? We should be half-way at any rate by this time."

"That we must be, for we're on level ground. It isn't quite two miles now to the dip just above."

They walked on for a minute or two in silence. "What's the matter, Johnny? what are you sighing at?"

"I've half a mind to turn back. I almost wish I had stayed out on your run, instead of coming home."

"Nonsense, man. Cheer up. Why, in an hour's time, you'll be warning yourself by the Ashen Faggot, you've told me so much about. We couldn't have hit a more lucky day."

"But don't you remember? Ashen aggot Night was the very time that it all began."

"And the properest night then for it all to end."

"They never answered your letter!"

"There was no time, man. The answer couldn't have come out before we had started."

"And you think it will be all right, then? If they only knew how bitterly I have grieved over it all, and how I have longed to see home again! And



now I'm here, I don't know how to face them. I almost wish I was back again."

"Cheer up, Johnny. Why, nothing would serve you but coming right off, the moment we landed, without giving me an hour in London, and now you want to be back again. Why, man, it will be the happiest minute of their lives, when they see you again."

"Do you think so?"

"I'm sure of it. But I'll be hanged if I know when it's likely to be, though. I can't see five yards ahead. All the snow in the heavens seems coming straight down on us. Do you think we're in the road?"

"Well, I hope so; but let's see." And Johnny stooped down and scratched a hole in the snow with his hand; the result of which was "Hullo!" and a long whistle.

"Eh, what is it?"

"Grass, by Jove! We're on the downs."

"Well, that's jolly. Let's try again." So the two tried several more places on each side of their track, with no better success.

"Here's a pretty go. Confound your unked road! we shall have to camp out, or walk all night."

"I hope not. If we go on, we must hit the Avenly dip somewhere."

"Come along, then. It's no good standing here."

They pushed on again, and soon began to be amused by their adventure, and laughed and chatted, in defiance of snow and downs. Their talk turned on home, and the elder was describing his feelings on coming back.

"By the way, Herbert, you've never told me why you left the old country."

"Because I couldn't live in it, Johnny. At my father's death I was left with the magnificent patrimony of 400*l*. and a clerk's place of 40*l*. a year. That didn't suit me. Besides, to tell the truth, I was in a bad way—ready to hang myself about a young woman. There was nothing for it but to bolt, and seek my fortune."

"And you've found it, too."

"Yes, in one way. But it doesn't seem worth much after all."

"Is she married then?"

"Heaven knows. I had a letter from her father, an old family friend, five years back. I think he suspected how matters stood. I never spoke, of course, as she was quite a girl, and it wouldn't have been fair. I wrote to him several times, but letters miscarry from our parts. Then I wrote to some people I knew, and got an answer that he had left our old neighbourhood. Hullo! we've run against something at last. What's this?"

"All right. It's one of the down barns," said Johnny, when they had groped their way round the building, which they had nearly run against; "we shall most likely be able to get in."

But they tried both the great side-doors and found them locked. "Hark! didn't I hear a sheep bleat?"

"Very likely. There's often a fold and a shepherd's cottage close by; which way was it?"

"Just down here."

They followed the sound for a short distance, and came upon haulm walls and hurdles, within which were a large flock of sheep, and the next moment heard furious barking. Then through the down-pour of snow they made out a small cottage, the door of which opened, and a tall figure in smock-frock and long leather gaiters appeared, thrown out into relief by the light in the room behind him.

"Quiet w'oot! Dal th' noise! Cas'n't let'm harken!" As the dog ceased barking, the shepherd's ear caught the crunching of the snow under their feet as they approached. "Hullo, ther! Wut be at wi' the vauld?"

"We've lost our way on the downs to-night, that's all. We came upon your fold by good luck; may we sit down till the storm's over?"

The shepherd looked somewhat suspiciously at them at first, but then moved aside.

"Ees, ee med cum in. But 'twunt last long this starm." So they entered the cottage, a low two-roomed place, the living-room opening to the outer air, in which they found the shepherd's wife,

and tailless dog, a small carefully-nursed fire, and the tea-things laid.

The occasion was just the one for the elder traveller, and he proved quite equal to it. Under his influence the shepherd's wife bustled about, and the fire was piled up with as much fuel of old faggots, coke, and cinders, as would have lasted the worthy couple a fortnight; the kettle sung and puffed away at the unwonted stimulant administered to him; the three mugs of the establishment were produced, and Johnny brought out a flask from his knapsack, full of good brandy. The coats were shaken by the shepherd, and hung up on pegs to dry, and in five minutes' time the whole party was settled down—the hosts to their tea, and the guests to a mug of grog each.

"Well, Johnny, this isn't a bad change from the Downs, eh? Look here, ma'am; let me put a drop of brandy in your tea; you can't think what a good thing it is. Eh, shepherd, you'll try my prescription, too, won't you?"

"Ef you please, zur. Ah, it do 'mazingly flavour th' tea; d'wont it, Betty? Wun't you tek' nothin' to yeat, zur? You be real welcum to't."

"No, thankee; we fed at Lilburne. But if your wife doesn't mind smoking—"

"Blessee, noa, zur. Do'ee light up. Hur be terrible vond o' th' smell o' baccour, tho' hur dwon't smoke."

"But you do, shepherd?"

"Lord, ees, zur."

"Then you must take some of my stock;" and, suiting the action to the word, he emptied his big pouch on the table, and, separating the contents, pushed about two-thirds over towards the shepherd, whose eyes glistened at the sight.

"'Tis very kind o' you, zur; but, can'ee spare't?"

"Yes, yes, there's plenty more where that came from. And, now you've done your tea, draw round, and brew a good mug of that stuff. Don't be afraid of it; it won't hurt you, nor you, ma'am, either, such a night as this. Your

health, ma'am; your health, shepherd; and yours, Johnny, and a merry Christmas to you all."

"The zaam to you, gen'tlemen, and many ov 'em."

The shepherd drinks, and passes the mug to his wife, and then produces a short black pipe, which he fills, and sucks at with evident delight, Herbert watching him. "There's nothing so comforting, when one's out with the sheep at nights, as a pinch of good tobacco, eh, shepherd?"

"Ther' beant, zur. But how do'ee cum to know't?"

"Oh! I'm a shepherd myself."

"Noa, be 'ee though? Thee dosn't look like one, zur. Wut zart o' vlock's yourn, zur?"

"I've three or four, of a thousand each."

"Vour thousand zhep! I hopes you've got volks wi' some gumption in 'em, zur, to look arter 'em these cowl'd nights."

"Oh, it's lambing time with us, and we never have any nights like this."

Shepherd chuckles, and looks incredulous.

"You don't believe me, I see, shepherd."

"I never heer'd tell o' lambin' much afore Easter."

"But you don't understand. It's summer now where I live."

"Zummer at Christmas time! a martial queer time o' year for zummer, zur."

"Yes, real hot summer."

"Wher do'ee live then, zur."

"On the other side of the world. In New South Wales."

"Dear heart! and zo 'tis zummer in them parts at Christmas time? Well, 'tis mighty curious to think on, now."

"Do'st mind, Jonas, as Mrs. Gibbins said, as her son, as wur transported wrote from Botany Bay as the seasons wur all got wrong ther.' Zo a zend to zay."

"You dwon't cum from Botany Bay, zur, do'ee?"

"Well, it's in the same part of the world. But we're not returned convicts, if that's what you mean."

Shepherd glances at his wife, and seems much relieved.

"But you may depend upon it, that's the place for us shepherds. What would you say now to fifty pounds a year, and your keep, with as much beef and mutton as you could eat? You don't get anything like that in the old country."

Shepherd stops smoking, and opens his eyes, "Vifty pound a year!"

"Ay, every penny of it, and not a bit too much. I should like to know who ought to be well paid if the shepherd isn't—

"If'twasnt for the sheep and the poor shepherd, 'The world would be starved and naked—

you know."

"So you knows th' owld zhearing zong!"

"No, I only know a line or two that I've picked up from my friend here. I should like to hear it of all things. Can't you give it us?"

The shepherd looks shy, but, after a little persuasion from his wife, who declares that he is noted for singing, he clears his throat and croons out:—

"Zeng, bwoys, zeng, a zhepherd's as happy as a lord,

And a zhep's the vinest creetur owld England can afford,

And, if you listens vor a while, the truth I zoon will tell 'ee,

'Tis clothin' to the back, my bwoys, and linin' to the belly.

The zhepherd stands beneath the bush, a-shiverin' and shakin',

If 'twasn't vor th' zhep and th' poor zhepherd th' world'd go starved and naked.

All along the winter time we gives our zhep some hay,

Keps fodderin' and fodderin' on until the month of May.

And, when the month of May cums in, if the weather should prove fine,

The little lambs will skip and play, and please the zhepherd's mind.

And, when the month of June cums in, if the weather should prove hot,

We teks the clothin' off their backs, while the pudding's in the pot.

And then agen at night, my bwoys, together we will zeng,

For a zhepherd lives as happy as ever a prince or king."

"Thank you. I shall carry the old song back to the other side of the world. Now, shepherd, come, take

another glass. The brandy isn't out, you see."

The shepherd, after some coquetting, makes another mixture in his cup, and hands it to his wife, who puts down her knitting, and gets up to make a little curtsey, and say, "Your health, gentl'men." The shepherd takes a drink.

"Ah! it zims to do a body good, that do, now—to put the heart into 'un, zur."

"I'm glad you like it. You must have a hard life of it up here on the downs at times."

"Ah, 'tis zur, I assure 'ee, and I had ought to know. Nigh varty year, man and bwoy, I've ben a zheperdin' and afore that I wur bird-kepin', when I wur quite a leetel 'un. I allus liked bird-kepin', and I've zhot a zite on 'em wi' th' owld king's-arm as maester kep vor't."

"What was the best shot you ever made, now?"

"Well, zur, I'll tell 'ee. It wur at th' rooks, and, ef you knows about bird kepin', you minds how keen the rooks be at seedin' time, to light and snicker about wher' thaay can see arra bit ov a scratch, specially in the mornin's. So I casts about in my yead—I haint got much book-larnin', but I got a yead on m' zhoulders as answers to't—how to cotch 'em, cos' 'em be aggravin' birds, plaguey cunnin' let 'em be never zo leaz. One mornin' afore light I hucks up a bit o' ground right afore the barn ther', and drows a handful o' zeed corn auver the scratch, and gets inside zo as um med'nt zee m', and then puts two pipes-full o' powder, and a'mwoast all the shot as I'd got, into the gun, and waits. Arter a bit I hears one on 'em a cawin' up above, and then down a cums, plump. Th' owld wosbird teks a look at th' barn, but both doors was wide open, zo as a' could zee right droo. Zo a gevs a caw as tho' 'twur all right (a could'nt zee I, for a bit o' straw as I'd got round m') and falls to hisselt, and, a'most afore you could look, the scratch wur all black wi' 'em, scrouging and cawin' together. Then I zets up zofzily and teks a long

breath, and zhuts m' eyes, and pulls. A went off wi th' mwest all-fired noise, and kicked I fit to bust. Wen I cum to, and zet up in the straw, and could look out, 'Lord,' sez I, 'wut! haint I killed not one on 'em?' Then I heers a floppeting behind m', and turns round. You zee, zur, th' owld king's-arm had took and kicked I right round, zo as I wur looking out o' tother door o' the barn wen I cum to."

"Oh, yes, shepherd, I dare say."

"Well, but when you got faced round again to the right door, what had you done?"

"Lord, zur, the ground wur all black wi 'em, mostly dead, but zum on 'em hobblin' about—more nor dree-score on 'em —"

The shepherd is interrupted by the laughter of the younger of his guests.

"You med b'leeve m' or not, as you plazes, zur."

"Three-score rooks at a shot. What do you say to that, ma'am?"

"Twur afore my time, zur, but I never heerd Jonas tell it no other waay."

"Well, it would take a big whale to swallow you, Jonas."

"Poor owld mother tuk and put zum on 'em into a pie. But 'em did yeat terrible runk—I wun't deny but 'em wur terrible runk."

"So I should think. Let's see, what's the time? Not half-past seven. How's the night, shepherd?"

The shepherd gets up and goes to the door.

Johnny, in a low voice to Herbert, "I know all about where we are now—only about a mile and a-half from home. It's the great barn we used to call the haunted barn."

"What was it haunted with?"

"Cats: I'll tell you the story presently. I don't want to talk, or Jonas might recognise me."

"Not he. Well, what do you make of the night, shepherd?"

"Tis clearin' off, zur. 'Twill be vine enuff d'rectly."

"Did you ever see any ghosts in the barn?"

"Haw! haw! Noa, zur. Ther' beant no bogles up here; thaay keps down below, thaay does."

"Well, we may as well be getting ready for a start." So they got up, put on their coats, shouldered their knapsacks, and, having astonished Jonas's wife by a present of five shillings to buy fuel with, stepped out, accompanied by Jonas.

The last flakes of the snowstorm were falling, and the moon shone out keen and white, and the air felt deliciously keen and fresh after Jonas's little close hole of a kitchen.

"How splendid!" said Herbert, as they paused before the cottage door. "Hark! don't I hear bells?"

"Zartin zhure. Thaay be Avenly Christmas bells, zur, a-ringin' for Squire Kendrick's Ashen Faggot. Thaay'll be lightin' he up zmartish, I'll war'nd."

"We can go straight across to Avenly, I suppose."

"Ees, zur, straight as you plaazes. Zo you be gwine to Avenly?"

"Yes, I hope so."

"Did'ee ever heer o' th' Squire's zon as runned awaay vrom whoam out in thaay forrin' parts, zur?"

"I never met any one who went by that name. So the Squire's son ran away from home?"

"Ees a did, mwoar' nor a year ago."

"How was that?"

"Well, I d'wont kneow th' rights on't, zur. I've heerd as a wur zo nat'rally grounded wi' pride and obst'ncy a would'nt tek a word vrom's own vather. Then a' spent a zite o' money, I heerd, at college. Hows'mever, won daay, th' Squire spoke zharper n' usual to'n, and a went aff then and ther. A wan't a bad haart neither; that I 'ool zaay var'n. I've a zeed un about wi' Tummus scoors o' times; Tummus be the Squire's zhepherd, and wur main vond ov'n. But a'd got a zart o' prodigalish waay wi' un as did'nt bode no good."

"Well, shepherd, I hope he'll come to his senses and get back home soon."

"I wishes a med, zur. For th' squire hev never rightly held up s' yead sence he bin gone; nor madam neither. And there a'nt a better maester nor

missus in th' whole country-zide. I kneows I wishes I'd been barn on he's lands."

"Well, good-bye, shepherd. I hope we may meet again before long."

"I dwont care how zoon, zur. But shall I gwo 'lang with 'ee a bit, to shew 'ee th' waay?"

"No, thanks, we shall do famously; good night."

So they shook the horny hand of their host, and went off across the glittering snow in the still moonlight towards Avenly dip, with the Christmas chime coming up from the little hamlet, and speaking to open hearts, of the child that was born, and the shepherds that kept their flocks, in a far land, near twenty centuries ago.

#### CHAPTER IV.

"LET th' adze 'bide, Maester Dick; let th' adze 'bide, I tell'ee. Dal'd if I dwon't gev thee the stick, ef thee gwoes an spwlin the tools, aal as I can zaay."

Dick Kendrick, to whom this objurcation was addressed in the outhouse next the stable of Avenly Manor House, which was used for a carpenter's shop, dropped the forbidden adze for the moment. Moses Ockle, the carpenter, his interlocutor, went on with his work for some time with one eye on the adze, but presently relaxed his vigilance, and Dick had hold of the adze again, and was chipping away at a tough log of timber, "before a body could wink a'mwoast," as his victim described it. The second or third chink of the adze, however, recalled Moses to the state of affairs, and, dropping the saw he was using, he caught up the nearest switch he could lay hands on, and made at Dick, who bolted behind the big bench which stood in the middle of the shop, meaning to parley. This afforded him protection for the moment, but, seeing that Moses was in earnest, and would infallibly reach him over the bench, he broke cover, and made for the open door, upsetting, on his way, the cross-trees at which his pursuer had been

working, and just escaping a swingeing blow, which the enraged carpenter, his shins smarting from contact with the over-set cross-trees, aimed at him, and which fell on the door-post.

"Od, drattle th' young carcass," growled Moses, as he gathered up his work and went on with it; "thee bist he very moral o' thy brother. He wur transpported, or zummat equal to't, and thoult cum to th' gallus, zhure as my neam's Moses."

"Well, Moses," said William Kendrick, entering a few minutes afterwards, "you're making the Ashen Faggot for to-night, ain't you?"

"Ees, Maester Willum."

"Will you please make a smaller one too? You'll be glad, I know, to hear that we have had news of my brother. So papa and mamma say the children may have a faggot before the supper begins."

"That I ool, Maester Willum. And how many hoops 'll 'ee hev to un?"

"Oh, four or five, Moses."

"Zaay arf a dozen, zur. But I be mazin' glad to hear about th' young squire. And wher be un then, Maester Willum, make zo bowld, and wut be un doin' ov?"

"He is in Australia, right on the other side of the world, Moses. And he is very well, and doing capitally. He is a sort of head man to a great sheep farmer there."

"Th' young squire a zhepperdin! Maester Willum?"

"Yes, Moses, and why not? The sheep farmers are the great people. I should like nothing better than to go out myself, and make my own way there. But can't you let me help you? I should so like to help make the Ashen Faggots for to-night."

Moses was nothing loath. Willie was a very different style of boy from Dick, and so the two worked on together, Moses cutting ash poles for the two faggots, and Willie under his direction preparing the hazel rods for her hoops.

"Why don't you make the hoops of ash too, Moses?"

"'Cause hazel burn slawer, and zo howlds th' vaggot together langer."

By the time it was dusk they had finished binding the two faggots; one a monster, some six feet long, with about a dozen hazel hoops round him, the other a miniature one of half the size. Willie marched off in triumph with the smaller, leaving the carpenter to follow with the other when he had tidied up the place a bit, which he did, muttering to himself: "And zo th' young squire be zhepperdin, be un? Ef a' had 's desarvins a'd be kepin' pegs, like he in Scriptur, and a fillin ov s' belly wi' th' husks as th' zwine did yet."

Willie and the carpenter deposited their burdens in a huge lofty room at one end of the house, away from the sitting-rooms. It was called the kitchen, but seldom used for that purpose, a smaller and more central room having succeeded it. It had now become more a servant's hall, but its special vocation, and one for which it was eminently qualified, was that of receiving the periodical gatherings at harvest homes, Ashen Faggot nights, and such occasions, when the Kendricks made entertainment for their vassals.

The chief feature in the room was the fireplace, which cannot be better described than in the homely words of a rhymor of the country—

My veather's vires wur mead o' logs  
O' cleft 'ood down upon the dogs,  
In our gut vire-place, zo wide  
As you med draw a cart inzide,  
An big an little med zet down  
On boath zides, an avore, an all rown;  
An up in corner thaay did hitch  
The zaalt box on the bacon vltch;  
An, when I wur a zettin, I  
Could zee aal up into the sky  
An watch the zmoke gwo vrom the vire  
Aal up an out at un, an higher;  
An ther' wur beacon upon rack,  
An plates to yet it upon tack;  
An rown the walls were yarts, stowd  
In jeapern bags, an blathers blowed;  
An jest above the clayey boord  
Were vather's gun, an zpurs, an zoord;  
An ther' were ther' our gerrest pride,  
The zettle by the vire zide.

This room was now, under the hands of two maids, being prepared for the evening's festivities, while the children

ran in and out, helping, as they delighted to think. A bright fire crackled already on the dogs, which were in due time to receive the Ashen Faggots; all the furniture was moved except the great table which ran along one side. There was plenty of Christmas, in the shape of holly and ivy, over the fire-place and on the walls, and a bunch of mistletoe hanging from a rack in the middle of the ceiling. The Ashen Faggots were duly deposited in a corner of the great fireplace, and, by five o'clock, when the maids and children went off to tea, all was ready. The kitchen was left, winking away in the cozy firelight, for the fairies, if they pleased, to come in and take their pastime on the clean sanded floor. Meantime, the sole occupants were two robins, who seemed to be thoroughly satisfied with the asylum which they had hit upon for their Christmas Eve, and chirped to one another, as they flitted about, and peered with their small bright eyes into every corner, discoursing, no doubt, of how unpleasant the snow was becoming outside, and what fools their neighbours, the wrens and sparrows, were, not to avail themselves of such comfortable quarters, before they went up to perch for the night on the bacon rack.

The robins, no doubt, soon began to see reasons for reconsidering their opinions, when, at about six o'clock, the door which led from the house opened, and Clara, Bobby, and Maggie, and the party of children they had been allowed to ask to tea, rushed into the room, followed by Mabel, and her friend the clergyman's daughter, who brought her little nephews, and Miss Smith.

After the first rush round the great room, all so nicely cleared for a good romp, had been duly executed by the children, and candles had been lighted, there was a call at once for the Ashen Faggot. In fact, Bobby and the vicar's eldest grandson had seized on it, and were in the act of putting it on the dogs, when Mabel suggested that it would be burnt out too soon if they lighted it at once.

"Oh, yes, let us have a play first,"



said Clara ; "and then we will sit down and make forfeits, or Mabel will tell us a story, and then we can have the faggot."

"And Aunt Nelly will sing us a song, won't you? one we can all join in?" said the vicar's grandson.

"Oh, yea, Walter, presently, when you are all tired of play." And so to play they went vigorously. Blind-man's-buff, hunt-the-slipper, and the post-office, in which latter game Clara distinguished herself, succeeded one another rapidly; and the circle was constantly increased by the arrival of one after another of the servants—dairymaid, laundrymaid, housemaid, nursemaid, &c. The Ashen Faggot was put on in triumph, and blazed and crackled to the complete satisfaction of the young ones. Then a great dish came in for snap-dragon, and Bobby and his friend were soon distinguishing themselves by dashing their hands bravely into the burning brandy, and bringing out the raisins for their favourites amongst the group of girls. When all the raisins had been extracted and eaten, and the salt had been duly thrown into the burning spirit, and everybody had looked sufficiently green and cadaverous, a cry for forfeits arose. So the party sat down round Mabel on benches brought out from under the table, and Mabel began,—

"The first day of Christmas my true love sent to me a partridge and a pear-tree ;

The second day of Christmas my true love sent to me two turtle-doves, a partridge, and a pear-tree ;

The third day of Christmas my true love sent to me three fat hens, two turtle-doves, a partridge, and a pear-tree ;

The fourth day of Christmas my true love sent to me four ducks quacking, three fat hens, two turtle-doves, a partridge, and a pear-tree ;

The fifth day of Christmas my true love sent to me five hares running, four ducks quacking, three fat hens, two turtle-doves, a partridge, and a pear-tree."

And so on. Each day was taken up and repeated all round ; and for every breakdown (except by little Maggie, who struggled with desperately earnest round eyes to follow the rest correctly, but

with very comical results), the player who made the slip was duly noted down by Mabel for a forfeit.

In the middle of the game, the door which opened to the garden flew open, and Willie and Dick arrived on the scene of action, with—

"Now then, make room, here are the mummers!"

"Oh? the mummers, the mummers! hurrah!" chorused the infantry, as they withdrew, under Mabel and Nelly's wing, to the side and end of the kitchen. St. George and his adversary were then called by the two boys, who stood by the door, as masters of the ceremonies. They came in, shaking the snow from their queer attempts at costume, consisting of helmets, in shape very like fools'-caps, of different coloured paper, and scraps of ribbon and coloured cloth or cotton, sewn on to their smockfrocks. They marched round after one another, repeating their introductory verses in a queer nasal sing-song, and then fell to single combat with their wooden swords, which soon resulted in the discomfiture of St. George. His adversary, being of a noble temper, now calls for the doctor.

"Doctor, doctor, plaay thy part ;  
St. Gaarge be wounded to the heart :  
Doctor, doctor, come and see ;  
St. Gaarge be wounded in the knee."

The ridiculous figure called the doctor answers the appeal, entering with—

"Here cums I, a ten pound doctor ;  
Ten pound is my fee ;  
But, sence thee bist a vriend o' mine,  
I'll tek but vive vrom thee."

And so it goes on, with much more ridiculous doggrel, but of absorbing interest to little Maggie, and all the younger portion of the audience.

"Well, what were you playing at when we came in?" said Willie, as the mummers went off, after getting the accustomed gratuity.

"Forfeits," said Mabel. "Will you play? Our faggot is nearly out, so you won't have much of it."

"Hullo! look, here's a robin; what fun!" said Dick, shying his cap at one of the robins, who, from his perch on the rack, was contemplating the doings

of mankind, with his head on one side, and thinking probably what fools they must be, to be carrying on their unmeaning games, instead of sleeping and letting him sleep.

Dick had three or four shots with his cap at the birds, before Mabel, backed by Willie, to whom she appealed, could make him leave them alone. Then they took to forfeits again; and Dick, who was absolute lord of misrule in the place, soon made it too uproarious. Whenever it came to his turn to declare a forfeit (and he constantly managed that it should do so, by making horrible faces, and otherwise interrupting the one whose turn it was to repeat), he played some half-malicious prank. At last, having caught up the dairy-mail, he declared her forfeit "clenching hands." This operation is performed by the caller and payer of the forfeit standing up, and joining their hands with the fingers laced, when the gentleman, by extending his arms, brings the lady's face close up to his own, and kisses her. In the present case, the dairymaid, being full as strong as Master Dick, kept him nearly at arms' length; but the attempt annoyed Mabel, who put a stop to the game. Whereupon Dick took himself off till supper-time, declaring them slow.

They were getting rather tired, and the embers of the faggot were all red-hot and nearly consumed; so they made a circle round, and the maids brought some logs and put them on.

"Now, Aunt Nelly, you must sing us a song."

"Oh yes, the one about the sisters, and the cherry without a stone, please," said Bobby.

"Very well. Mabel, you will take the questions. And, mind, you must all sing the chorus."

"I had four sisters lived over the sea,

*Parra marra dictum domine;*

They each sent a Christmas present to me,

*Partum quantum paradise templum,*

*Parra marra dictum domine.*

The first sent a cherry without a stone,

*Parra marra dictum domine;*

The second sent a bird without a bone,

*Partum quantum paradise templum, &c.*

The third sent a blanket without a thread,

*Parra marra dictum domine;*

The fourth sent a book no man could read,

*Partum quantum paradise templum, &c.*  
How could it be a cherry without a stone?

*Parra marra dictum domine;*

How could it be a bird without a bone?

*Partum quantum paradise templum, &c.*

How could it be a blanket without a thread?

*Parra marra dictum domine;*

How could it be a book no man could read?

*Partum quantum paradise templum, &c.*

When the cherry's in the bud it has no stone,

*Parra marra dictum domine;*

When the bird's in the egg it has no bone,

*Partum quantum paradise templum, &c.*

When the blanket's in the fleece it has no thread,

*Parra marra dictum domine;*

When the book's in the press no man can read,

*Partum quantum paradise templum,*

*Parra marra dictum domine."*

The song and chorus delighted the children; and then Mabel was called on for her story, which would, no doubt, fascinate readers as much as it did her audience round the remains of the ashen faggot, were there space to give it. And now it was getting near eight o'clock, the chimes were ringing out, and it was time to prepare the kitchen for the supper of the grown-up folk. Nelly and her charge withdrew through the house, and the other children dispersed. Mabel remained to give an eye to the supper-arrangements. Presently Bobby and Maggie, who had not yet been carried off, ran up and pulled her gown.

"Oh, Mabel, come and look, do come and look!"

"What is it, Bobby?"

"Oh, two great hairy faces, like the giants in our picture-book."

"Where? What do you mean, Bobby?"

"Here, at the window. They frightened Maggie so."

"Oh yes, that they did," said Maggie, holding on to her sister's gown. "You ain't afraid, Mabel?"

"No, dear; come along." So she went to the window, which looked out on the garden, and which she had opened a few minutes before to freshen the room.

"Why, Bobby, you must have fancied it all."

"No, no ; didn't we see two great hairy faces, such big ones, looking in ?"

"Oh, yes, Mabel."

Mabel looked out carefully amongst the shrubs. The moon and snow made it almost as light as day, except just in the shadow of the house ; but she could see nothing.

"Well, Bobby, you see they've run away. They couldn't get through these bars at any rate ; so we're quite safe. Hark ! there are the school-children, singing a carol at papa's window. Come along ; you can go and hear them, and say good-night to papa." And so Mabel and the children left the kitchen.

"Nearly caught, eh, Johnny ?" whispered the elder of our travellers, as the two drew themselves up in the shadow of the house, behind a laurel. "Who was the pretty little bright-eyed girl ?"

"My little sister, Maggie."

"And the boy ?"

"My youngest brother, Bob."

"And the tall girl they ran up to ?"

"My eldest sister, Mabel."

"You're a lucky dog. Hark ! what's that ?"

"The school-children, singing a carol before the house."

They listened while the young voices sang the grand old carol—

"While shepherds kept their flocks by night." Neither spoke for some seconds after the voices ceased.

"What are you going to do, Johnny ?" Herbert said gently, at last.

"Oh, I don't quite know yet ; I am so confused still. You don't mind waiting a little ?"

"Not a bit. As long as you please, that we get housed by bed-time."

"Here come the people to 'Ashen Faggot,' stand back."

"Now, papa. They have done supper, and Dick and I have put the Ashen Faggot on, and it's just blazing up. You'll come in and wish them a merry Christmas, won't you ?"

Mr. Kendrick rose from his chair in the parlour, where he was sitting with

his wife and Mabel, and prepared to go with Willie.

"But the vicar isn't come," he said ; "he would like to go in with me and say a few words to them."

"Oh, John, I'll wait for the vicar and Nelly, and bring them in for a few minutes when they come."

So Mr. Kendrick and Mabel went with Willie back to the kitchen, where the Ashen Faggot was already crackling and roaring away merrily on the dogs. The women, who had supped with their husbands and brothers, were seated in the chimney-corner, and round one side of the fire on benches, leaving the space clear between the fire and the long table. At the upper end of the table, the bailiff, the carpenter, the parish-clerk, and the wheelwright were seated, and the farm-labourers, men and boys, below. Mabel joined the women, while her father took the top of the table ; the men all rising till he had taken his seat, with Willie by his side. Dick was seated at his ease next to the bailiff, on the opposite side from Moses, the carpenter.

There were several large copper jugs on the table, out of one of which Mr. Kendrick filled a horn of beer.

"Here's a merry Christmas to you all," he said, drinking, "and I hope you've enjoyed yourselves to-night !"

"Ees, ees, that us hev'," chorused the men, and, at a sign from the bailiff, Moses, the carpenter, cleared his throat and sang—

"Here's a health unto our maester,  
Th' vounder ov this veast ;  
I haups to God wi' aal my heart,  
His sowl in heav'n may rest,  
And ael his works med prawsper,  
Wutever he teks in hand,  
Vor we are ael his zarvents,  
And ael at his command.

CHORUS.

Then drenk, bwoys, drenk,  
And mind you do not spill ;  
Vor, ef you do, you must drenk two,  
Vor 'tis our maester's will."

"Your health, zur, and missus's and ael th' fam'ly, and a merry Christmas to ee ael, and many ov 'em !" followed this poetical greeting, which was sung vociferously, the words being those of an

old harvest-home song, well known for generations to all the inhabitants of Avenly."

"Now you can light your pipes, and make the most of your time; the Ashen Faggot waits for nobody."

The lighting up of pipes soon followed this permission; and Mr. Kendrick, after chatting for a minute or two to the men nearest him, was just getting up to speak, when the lowest of the hazel bonds of the Ashen Faggot burst.

"A bond, a bond; drenk to th' bond," said several voices. The bailiff looked at his master, who seated himself at once.

"No, no, I can wait," he said; "keep to your custom. A sip and a song for every bond."

This saying was received with enthusiasm, and a call on Muster Hockle followed. The carpenter seemed the favourite performer. "Gie's th' howl's disaster, Maester Hockle," suggested the bailiff.

I've often heard my gram 'mer tell  
Of a peart young owl, as ael the day  
In a nook of the paason's barn did dwell,  
In hidlock blinkin' the time away.

But, zo soon as ever the zun were zet,  
A poachin' away like mad went he,  
And once his desarvings he dipt get,  
As aal o' you shall presently zee.

A vloed vor miles auver hill and dale,  
And a' caddled the mice in many a yeld;  
For ael o' you as heers this tale  
Do know as the weakest must allus yeld.

At last a hunted zo vur away  
That the zun cum peeping auver the hills,  
And the birds waked up and did un espy,  
And wur ael in a churn az um whetted  
their bills.

"Gwo at un, my bwoys," the missel-dresh  
cries;

"A vrightened my mate, and her eggs be  
ael addled;"

And the yuckle did scream, "Let us peck out  
his eyes;

Zich a girl mouchin' wosbird deserves to be  
caddled."

Thaay dreshed un long, and thaay dreshed un  
zore;

Thaay dreshed un and tar ael the dowl vrom  
his yead,

And thaay vollured un whoam unto the barn  
dwoor,

And ther' thaay left un purty nigh dead.

## MORAL.

Now, ael you young men as loves ramblin' o'  
night,

Be plazed from this story to take timely  
warnin'.

Vor ther' med be them as ud not thenk it  
right.

If you chances to get auvertuk by the  
marnin'.

Any one who had thought of looking at the garden window during Moses's song would have been able to confirm the story of little Maggie on all points, except as to the size of the two faces which peered through the window-bars. They might easily have fancied that the fleshy embodiments of some two antagonist Christmas principles were watching the Ashen Faggot supper from without; so marked was the contrast between the merry curious look of the lighter, and the painful tension of muscles and hungering anxiety of the darker face.

"Lawk! do'ee look, Miss Mabel. Zhure as vate I zeed zummat at th' winder," whispered Goody Oekle, the carpenter's wife, to Miss Kendrick.

Mabel glanced at the window a little nervously, and thought she detected figures disappearing; but her father had now risen to speak to his men, and she turned to listen.

"You all know," he said, with his homely Wiltshire manner, which gave him such a hold over the people who lived round him, "you know well, after all these years we have lived side by side as good neighbours, how much I enjoy meeting you here at such times as this. For five-and-twenty years now we have met here, and had our merry makings, our harvest-homes, and Ashen Faggot nights, through bad times and good times. Well, we've had good times lately in field and fold, and I hope we're all thankful for them, and laying by something against hard times, which will be sure to come back again, sooner or later—remember that. When they come, I hope we shall all pull together, as we have done before; but there's nothing like being a little before the world. The only one of all those twenty-five Ashen Faggots which I

haven't seen burnt with you, was the last one. You all know why I wasn't with you. It had pleased God to send me a very fearful trial last year, and I hadn't the heart to come among you as usual. I know how pleased you will all be, to hear that I have had good news to-day from the other side of the world; good news of Master John." Here his voice faltered, and, when the rough murmurs of sympathy had subsided a little, he changed the subject abruptly, and went on. "It has always been a source of great pride to me and to our good vicar, whom we all love as an old friend, though he has only been with us four years or so" (the vicar, who had just entered, with Mrs. Kendrick on his arm, followed by his daughter, was hailed by a burst of applause, and stood benevolently wondering through his spectacles what it could be all about), "we are very proud to think how little drunkenness we have in this parish. I'm sure you'll all take a pride, and you particularly, boys," (the boys at the end of the table become specially attentive) "in keeping up our good name. 'Merry and wise,' is our Avenly motto. You will be sure to go right if you will only mind your mothers and wives, whom I am always delighted to welcome here with you, and who, mind, ought always to be with you at such times. Mind, boys, and men too, there's no honest mirth where wives and daughters can't come. There's one more word, which, perhaps, would come better from the vicar than from me; but, as he'll have his turn to-morrow in the pulpit, I may just touch upon his ground now. This 'Ashen Faggot' night, you know, is the night of peace and goodwill of all the year. So, if any of you have had fallings out with your neighbours, or in your families, now's the time to set them all right. Don't let the last bond of the faggot burst before we have made all our hearts clean and whole with all men this Christmas Eve. I see there's another bond just going to burst; so I shall only wish you all again a very merry Christmas."

The bond burst almost before Mr. Kendrick sat down, but not a soul in

the room noticed it. Every eye was turned to the opposite side of the room. Her father's look as he spoke, and some of his words, had touched Mabel very deeply. She could scarcely keep from bursting into tears. The warmth of the great faggot and the smell of the smoke gave her a choking feeling, which she found it every moment more difficult to struggle against. So she had glided across to the opposite door, and, opening it a little, stood by it listening. Just as Mr. Kendrick finished, she stepped out for a breath of fresh air, to look at the pure moonlight, and recover herself, when she heard her name whispered close by. She turned with a start, and the next moment found herself in the arms of a man. Altogether, the excitement of the day and the evening, with this last shock at the end of all, proved too much for her, and she fairly fainted away.

"Good God, Herbert! what am I to do? Here's Mabel fainting!"

"Why the deuce did you frighten her then? Come, bring her in," and, so saying, Herbert pushed the door open. The astonishment of the company vented itself first in a sort of gasp; Mr. Kendrick turned sharply round, following the universal stare, and beheld one bearded stranger in front, standing on his kitchen floor, with a big stick in his hand, and his daughter in the arms of another just behind him. He sprang to his feet, as did all the other men, but not before Mrs. Kendrick had rushed across the kitchen, crying—

"Mabel, dearest, what is it? What have you done to my child?"

"Mother, dear mother, don't you know me?"

"Johnny! Oh God, is it Johnny?" and now the mother was on his neck, sobbing hysterically; and the whole of the women thronged round them, and murmurs of "Master John!" "Tis the young squire, zhure enough!" "Massy, how a be grawed," and such like, passed round the men.

"Hadn't you better stand back, and give the young lady room to come round?" said Herbert.

Mr. Kendrick now pressed forward with blanched face through the crowd. The son could only stretch out his hand, with, "Dear father, you have forgiven me?"

John Kendrick, the elder, seized and grasped it twice, but could not speak. He was not the man to give way in public, but his bowels yearned to his son, and he fled away to his chamber to weep there.

Herbert was looking on, much moved, weighing within himself whether he could be of any use, when his eye caught sight of the vicar, making horrible gulping faces, and wiping his spectacles. He looked anxiously at him for a moment, and then, springing across, seized his hand and began shaking it furiously.

"Why, Mr. Ward, Mr. Ward, don't you know me?"

"Eh, oh! what! no! Who are you?" replied the vicar, shaking away, however, with great goodwill, and glad to find an outlet for his feelings.

"Why, Herbert Upton of course. Who should I be?"

"What, Herbert! God bless me! No, it can't be. Yes, I see. My dear boy, what brings you here? Where have you been? Why haven't you written?"

"So I have, often, some years back."

"What, written? I've never had the letters."

"And Nelly?"

"Oh, here she is, somewhere. Nelly, where are you? We often talk of you and old times."

And now there was like to be another catastrophe calling for salts and cold water, as Herbert and Nelly met again after six years' parting. He had left her a slip of a girl, and found her a fine young woman. She had last seen

him a stripling of twenty, and he stood there now a great-bearded man.

Readers must picture to themselves the rest of the scene—how the troubled groups divided themselves again; how the Ashen Faggot revelry went on in the kitchen, every bond that had burst during the interruption receiving due posthumous honours; how the reputation of Avenly for strict sobriety was somewhat shaken that night, though nothing was said about it by squire or vicar; how, at the supper in the parlour, to which no one but Herbert and Dick did any justice, the story of Herbert's meeting with Johnny half-starved in the streets of Sydney, and taking him into his employment, of their defence of their waggon and beasts against bushrangers, of the lucky accident which enabled Herbert to come home, was told by fits and starts in answer to a thousand questions.

It was almost midnight before they broke up, and then Mr. Kendrick asked the vicar to read to them, and took down his big Bible. And the old vicar, peering through his spectacles, turned to the 15th chapter of St. Luke, and read it; and, as the well-known words were heard again, there was no dry eye in the parlour, except the incorrigible Dick's.

Herbert Upton escorted the vicar and Nelly home; and on the next Sunday the banns of Herbert Upton, of New South Wales, and Eleanor Ward, of Avenly, were duly published for the first time in the parish church. Herbert established himself for the winter at the vicarage, with three good hunters, which stood in Mr. Kendrick's capacious stables. The worthy villagers of Avenly will long remember and talk over the Ashen Faggot night when the young squire came home again.



## A GLANCE BEYOND THE "TRENT" \* DIFFICULTY : THE INTERNATIONAL LAW OF THE SEA.

BY J. M. LUDLOW.

BEFORE these pages appear in print, the dread issues of war and peace, which hang upon the "case of the *Trent*," will in all probability have been decided; the discussion of the chief points of international law involved in it will have become superfluous, as respects the solution of the present difficulty. But even assuming, as I earnestly trust, that that solution will be peace—that the great sorrow which has fallen upon England and her queen, through the death of the Prince Consort, will not have been outraged by the din of war,—nay, hoping, as I do, that that event will itself tend to still men's angrier passions on either side of the Atlantic,—I believe that there could be no greater fallacy than to suppose that the difficulty itself is but a summer cloud, to pass away and be forgotten. It is, on the contrary, it can be, but the first as towards us, as the shelter given to the *Nashville* will have been to the Americans, of a series of inevitable frictions produced by a state of war, between nations kindred in pluck, spirit, enterprise, national pride—frictions which are certain to fret into sores, if real wisdom be not actively employed on both sides to minimize pressure, ease contact, soothe every chafed surface.

Never in the history of mankind were the circumstances of any war more favourable for endeavouring to mitigate, at least, its maritime horrors. The war is wide as the continent over which the territories of the belligerents extend, wide as the water-world over which the trade of one of them is spread, and the privateers of the other are scattered. Yet there are no entangling alliances, no furiously passionate sympathies, to stretch the compass of that war over any others than the two belligerent powers; it is the interest, and till now

it is, I trust, the wish of all the world besides, to stand neutral. And the two belligerent powers are the fragments of one, whose whole foreign history, since it entered upon the world's stage, is, so to speak, one long assertion of the rights of neutrality;—whose worst demerits towards foreign countries have been, that it seldom seemed to know where these rights stopped, and by what test a neutral trader was to be distinguished from a piratical slaver or a lawless filibuster;—and which has sometimes acted as if it deemed it lawful, on strictly neutral principles, to annex every neighbouring province and island. It is impossible thus for either belligerent, without stultifying their common history, to seek to stretch those rights of war, which all the world besides is so interested in curtailing.

Let us briefly recall the facts as matter of history. A steamer, owned by a chartered British Company, under contract with the British Government, for a certain yearly sum, to carry the British mails under the charge of an Admiralty agent, but not in Government employ, and making the usual profit of a merchant ship on passengers and freight, is stopped on her voyage between neutral port and neutral port, being part of the return-route of the mails, by an American war-steamer, and four persons are taken out of her, as agents of what England and France have recognised as a belligerent power, but the United States treat as yet only as an unlawful league of rebel provinces.

Now, when all the treatises on the law of nations, all the reports of Courts of Admiralty, have been fully ransacked for principles and precedents to bear upon the *Trent* difficulty, there remain in it several points which none of these

can reach, which it is most essential to determine. For instance, the seemingly elementary questions—In what light are we to consider a ship at sea? What is the protection which may be afforded by a national flag?—however much discussed, have never been decided. Even the very practical question of the right of search, as the case of the *Trent* itself shows, embraces several unsettled points.

Let us take the first question:—From Jefferson to Webster, America has endeavoured to maintain the principle, that a vessel is to be considered a part of the national territory. But it is obvious that such a principle, construed strictly, is radically contrary to the very existence of the right of search, which her own greatest international jurist, Dr. Wheaton (*"Elements of International Law,"* vol. ii. p. 248,) speaks of as "a belligerent right, essential to the exercise of the right of capturing enemy's property, contraband of war, and vessels committing a breach of blockade." Jefferson, indeed, did not shrink from such a conclusion. In a letter to R. R. Livingston, (September 9, 1801), written some months after his entering upon the duties of the Presidency, he says: "The persons on board a vessel traversing the ocean, carrying with them the laws of their nation, have among themselves a jurisdiction, a police, not established by their individual will, but by the authority of their nation, of whose territory their vessel still seems to compose a part, so long as it does not enter the exclusive territory of another. No nation ever pretended a right to govern by their laws the ship of another nation navigating the ocean. By what law, then, can it enter their ship, while in peaceable and ordinary use of the common element?" "War between two nations," he says, further on, "cannot diminish the rights of the rest of the world remaining at peace." And he proceeds accordingly to argue away the whole doctrine of "contraband of war." (*"Correspondence,"* vol. iii. pp. 487-8.)

Between this doctrine of "neutral

ship, neutral territory," thus carried out to its logical consequences, and the old English doctrine of untransferable allegiance, in virtue of which the Crown claimed a prerogative right of enforcing the services of English subjects wherever they might be, and searching neutral vessels at sea to discover, impress, and if found to be deserters, hang them, there is an abyss. I believe the latter doctrine, although so late as 1842 Lord Ashburton declined to abandon it, will be found untenable for the future. I believe the former doctrine, though it has been once asserted by an English cabinet minister (Sir William Molesworth, in 1856), cannot be literally applied. Some right of search at sea in time of war must, I conceive, subsist, to prevent neutrality from sinking into the most treacherous and cowardly of all modes of warfare. Yet we feel instinctively, that much of the reasoning as to the territorial character of the ship comes entirely home to us. Let us see if there be not some principle by which these contraries can be reconciled.

It is strictly true, no doubt, that every ship is primarily governed by the municipal law of the country to which it belongs, and is therefore independent of any other. It is, so far, similar to the landed territory of the country itself. But there is this great difference between the two. The domain of the municipal law in question on land is fixed, and immediately continuous with other domains of a different municipal law. You cannot step out of France to the north without stepping into Belgium; to the north-east and east, without stepping into Germany, Switzerland, or Italy; to the south, where the frontier is a land one, without stepping into Spain. The sphere of international law, so far as it affects that territory on the land side, is purely a moral one. But, when we come to those domains of municipal law which are called ships, we find them in the first place movable ones—now continuous with the land-domain of the same law, now with that of another—and between the two, floating in a great

material realm of international law called the sea.

From this movable character of ship-territory, if we may so call it—from the circumfusion of the great international water-realm—flow important and peculiar consequences. No one, that I am aware, has ever claimed that the three miles of water, which are held annexed to every coast-line, should follow a ship at sea. Again, on land, the sovereignty of each system of municipal law is, within its domain, absolute against every other, except so far as it may be modified by treaty. Without a treaty for the pursuit or extradition of criminals, you have no right to meddle with a malefactor except upon your own territory. At sea, the pirate, though he may claim the benefit of every municipal law in succession, may be sunk or blown out of the water by the first comer; and this right has, under various safeguards, been extended in various cases to the prevention of the slave-trade. In time of war more important results yet follow. On land a belligerent, through his ambassadors and ministers, through his resident or travelling subjects, or simply through their relations with other countries, is almost always able to know all that is going on in a neighbouring neutral country. His frontier forts and forces protect him against direct hostilities. If aid be furnished to his adversary through another frontier of the neutral state, he can remonstrate, and, if need be, enforce neglected remonstrances by marching troops over his own frontier—in other words, by making war on the false neutral who is really helping his foe. But at sea he has no such safeguards. Suppose (which God forbid) a war between England and Prussia, France remaining neutral. Our coast-defences and Channel fleet may be a sufficient protection against French ships; our ambassador, consuls, English merchants established in France, Alpine club-men in search of summits, and every Brown, Jones, and Robinson on their travels, must look to the movements of French armies. But

what is to be done with all those little bits of France (if you choose to deem them so) called ships, which to-day may be lying in French harbours as parts of a larger France, storing in cannons, rifles, powder, shells, and a few days hence may be contemporaneous with the German coast? We cannot have a pair of English eyes on board of each; if we had, we could never reckon on receiving in time the result of their observations. Hence, I take it, the right of search, and, consequently upon it, the right of seizure. You, belligerent, want to know whether this floating morsel of alleged neutral territory is really what it professes to be, or whether it is not seeking to help your enemy. If it does so, it is really making war in alliance with him, and can no more deserve to be treated otherwise than as a belligerent than would the great fixed territory of which it claims to form a part, did the latter do the same things. And, therefore, you may take possession of it, just as you might, by the law of war, take possession of the country itself had you conquered it. The right of seizure of neutral vessels in such cases is really but a limitation of the rights of war, which, if not confined to the particular persons committing the breach of neutrality, would have to be extended to the country itself under whose flag the ship sails. You seize a private ship, as carrying on a private war against you, in order not to make war upon a nation. That such is the principle underlying all the law on the subject, is clearly proved by this, that unneutral conduct which, if practised by a private ship, would entail seizure and confiscation, if practised by a ship in the service of the State, would amount to a *casus belli*. And the right of search is, probably, the simplest method at present discovered for enforcing this limitation. A ship in the actual service of a neutral Government is held exempt from search, because her ownership is assumed to guarantee her good faith. A private ship is searched because it offers no such guarantee. Whether certain classes of vessels could not be assim-

lated for this purpose to vessels in actual Government employ—whether a system of guarantees for the faithful neutrality of others could not be devised, so as to obviate the necessity of search, are ulterior branches of the question. It will be seen that, viewed as we have viewed it, the right of search becomes no more a peculiar prerogative, but a mere form of ocean-police, requiring to be regulated, within fixed limits, by well-considered rules. America in particular has, by special treaties with different nations, endeavoured to effect this; there is no reason why the practice should not be generalized.

The position, therefore, that a ship at sea is to be considered as part of the country to which she belongs, must be taken with certain very important qualifications. Properly speaking, land-territory and ship-territory are analogous, not identical; the latter is to be held governed by the same rules as the former so far, and so far only, as the differences of subject-matter allow.

But now—granted the belligerent right of search, or search and seizure, as respects ship-territory,—the next question is, On what grounds should it be exercised? These, so far as the past is concerned, may be, perhaps, broadly summed up under five chief heads: 1. Contraband of war. 2. Despatches. 3. Persons in the enemy's service 4. Property belonging to the enemy. 5. Deserters, or other subjects of the searching Power. In considering them all, we should, moreover, always bear in mind the right of blockade, whereby a belligerent is held entitled, if strong enough, to cut off all communication with his enemy's coast.

The two last heads may be soon disposed of. The principle long enforced by England in her own practice, that a friend's goods in an enemy's ship are free, whilst an enemy's goods in a friend's ship are good prize, must be considered to have been waived since the Conferences of Paris in 1856, in favour of the opposite one long contended for by neutrals, that "free ships make free goods." It is evident, indeed,

that the former one cannot be reconciled with the mutual independence at sea of the various domains of municipal law. You could not enter on land a neutral territory to seize the goods of your enemy; there is no reason why you should do so at sea. Moreover, it is acknowledged that neutrals are entitled to keep up friendly relations with each belligerent, so long as they do not directly aid either to carry on the war. There can, therefore, be no right to hinder them from carrying, as an act of friendly intercourse, his goods not being contraband of war, nor, consequently, to search his ship for such goods.

So, as before indicated, the same doctrine of the mutual independence of ship-territory would forbid in future the claim of any belligerent nation to take out its own subjects from any neutral ship, otherwise than by virtue of a treaty. Here again the right on land must govern that at sea. There is no reason why a nation should have any more right to search for and seize deserters, rebels, offenders of any description, subjects bound to service, on a neutral ship at sea, than in neutral territory on land. If anything, there is less, since the inconvenience to the neutral may be far greater; as when Washington complained that we had pressed men from American vessels by entire ships' crews. If the Southern commissioners were really seized as rebels, the act is in principle quite indefensible.

Putting then aside as untenable these two grounds claimed for the right of search, we revert to "contraband of war." On this head, I take it, the right of search must clearly subsist. For a neutral ship to carry to either belligerent arms, ammunition, military stores—to transform herself in short into a floating arsenal for his behoof,—is clearly un-neutral conduct, a virtual act of warfare. No doubt there is great difficulty in defining precisely what is contraband of war. No doubt such definition has been extended, will fluctuate according to circumstances. Dr. Wheaton, in his "History of the Law of Nations" (p. 126, and following), shows

how an extension of the term to naval stores took place about the beginning of the eighteenth century. What is contraband of war at one time or place, need not be so at another. To take the notorious instance of coal ; it evidently could not be contraband of war ere steam-ships existed ; it need not be even now, in any country which does not yet possess them ; it would be contraband of war of the most dangerous nature in a country which has war-steamer, and can get no coal but by sea. Thus, whilst it is easy to argue away all contraband of war by cavilling about the limits to be affixed to it, the very uncertainty of these limits in nature renders it all the more necessary to fix them by authority. Accordingly, the practice has often been followed in treaties, of defining or enumerating what articles should be contraband of war ; as in the treaty of commerce and navigation of 1794, between Great Britain and the United States ; or the maritime convention of 1801, between Great Britain and Russia, the long enumeration of contraband articles, in which begins with "cannons," and ends with "saddles and bridles." Of late our Queen's proclamations have in part fulfilled the office of a treaty for such purposes. I say in part, because the action of the proclamation is clearly only a limited one. No ship probably could escape condemnation in a belligerent's prize court, which could be shown to have carried articles declared contraband by the proclamation of its own sovereign ; but it does not follow that it would not be condemned for carrying articles not declared contraband by the proclamation, but which the prize court would hold to be such. What is needed on this head in international law, is clearly definite rules, universal agreement, subject of course to modification from time to time.

Let us consider now the case of despatches. The right of search and seizure for the carriage of them is fully recognised by international law. Lord Stowell, in particular, is very strong on the subject. He treats as despatches (case of the *Caroline*) "all official cor-

"munications of official persons on the public affairs of the Government."

"The comparative importance of the particular papers is immaterial," he declares ; "it is sufficient that they relate to the public business of the enemy, be it great or small." "It is not to be argued," he says, in another case (the *Atalanta*), that "it is necessary to show a military tendency." The consequence of such a service rendered by a neutral "is indefinite, infinitely beyond the effect of any contraband that can be conveyed. . . . In the transmission of despatches may be conveyed the entire plan of a campaign. . . . It is impossible to limit a letter to so small a size as not to be capable of producing the most important consequences in the operations of the enemy." And lastly, "when a party, from want of proper caution, suffers despatches to be conveyed on board his vessel, the plea of ignorance will not avail him" (the *Rapid*).

It is impossible to exaggerate the force and decisiveness of these positions. Nevertheless, I cannot help thinking that they require to be very considerably modified, if not wholly given up.

Let us consider the case of a war on land. France is at war with Holland, and has landed troops on the coast. Luxemburg, however, has not been reduced ; Belgium stands neutral. Would it be a breach of her neutrality to allow the despatches of both belligerents to pass across her territory—between the invading army and France—between the Netherlands and outlying Luxemburg ? I rather think that either belligerent, whose despatches she might stop, would be very apt to make it a *casus belli*. I am not aware that during the Italian campaign Austria ever dreamed of making the passage of French couriers through Switzerland a ground of complaint against the latter.

Is there any reason why the mere transmission of despatches by sea should be governed by other rules ? Unless the neutral ship be actually hired for the transmission of the despatch, in which case she is clearly neutral no longer, but

in the service of the belligerent, or unless the coast be blockaded to which the despatch is addressed, I confess I see no such reason. Whilst the coast is open, the carrying of the despatch is *prima facie* a mere friendly act, entirely within the rights of the neutral. It is no more concern of his that the despatch should direct hostile operations, than it is, that the cargo of corn which he carries should be used for such. Its being addressed to a blockaded coast may afford, indeed, some suspicion of an intention to break the blockade, just as the carriage of goods so directed may afford; but, even in this case, according to the new rule of "free ship, free goods," it seems to me that both should be respected, if the voyage is shown to be a *bona fide* one to a neutral or open port. The breach of a blockade is a mischief, not a crime; the neutral is not to be considered as an accomplice because, not breaking the blockade himself, he carries for one who does or means to do so.

I venture to think, therefore, that the mere carriage of despatches by neutrals—the voyage not being for that purpose—will, by the international law of the future, be primarily taken out of the category of un-neutral acts, and only assimilated to the carriage of contraband in those cases where knowledge of the hostile character of the despatch can be distinctly fastened upon the master or owners.

An exception has indeed been admitted as respects despatches, when proceeding from an ambassador. It has been decided (the *Caroline*) that despatches may be lawfully carried by a neutral from the ambassador of a belligerent in a neutral state to the belligerent country. But it has also been decided that despatches may not be lawfully carried from a belligerent country to the ambassador of a belligerent in a neutral country—the despatches in this case being indeed meant for the belligerent country (the *Constantia*, cited in note to the *Caroline*). Are these two views consistent? "It is too much," said Lord Stowell, "to say that all the business of the two states shall be transacted

"by the minister of the neutral state, "resident in the enemy's country. The "practice of nations has allowed to "neutral states the privilege of receiving "ministers from the belligerent states, "and the use and convenience of an "immediate negotiation with them." But when a belligerent stops his adversary's despatches from reaching the neutral state, does he not, *pro tanto*, compel "the business of the two states" to be "transacted by the minister of the neutral one?" If meant for the benefit of the neutral—*e. g.* to pay debts contracted in the neutral country,—is not the "convenience" of the neutral seriously invaded by a stoppage of the despatch? I cannot help thinking, therefore, that—apart from the question of breach of blockade—the carriage of despatches to the ambassador of the belligerent in the neutral state deserves to be placed on precisely the same footing as the carriage of despatches from such ambassador.

Again, the growth, since the last war, of the great system of international mail transport, which has now well-nigh girdled the world, amounts to another call for the modification of existing international law on this subject. I believe myself that where a mail-packet has on board a duly appointed officer in charge of mail-bags, she should be absolutely exempt from search; although it would probably be necessary in that case to give the mail-agent certain powers of forbidding the carriage of articles or persons contraband or quasi-contraband of war. But at any rate, the inclusion in such cases in an ordinary mail-bag of a despatch to or from either belligerent should of itself—as admitted, indeed, already by French and American jurists—constitute no *indiciu*m of unneutral conduct.

There remains now to consider the carrying of persons in the service of a belligerent. As respects military persons, the right of search and seizure must, I take it, subsist, as clearly as in respect of contraband of war. It is absurd to forbid a neutral from carrying cannons or rifles, if he is not also to be forbidden from carrying



the hands that are to make hostile use of them. No doubt there is an old case before Sir George Lee (the *Hendric and Alida*), which decided that the carriage of both military men and contraband of war of the most distinct nature, intended for the service and use of a belligerent, but between neutral port and neutral port, could not be interfered with. But I cannot see how such doctrines can be reconciled with any consistent view of ship-territory, as ruled by the municipal laws of the country to which it belongs. If England be at war with France, Belgium neutral, it must be just as much a breach of Belgian friendship with England to carry French soldiers by Belgian ships from Ostend to Antwerp, or *vice versa*, as by land from the Belgian frontier to Ostend. The latter would be a clear *casus belli*—why is a ship to do the former, and go free? The destination of the ship carrying such military persons appears therefore immaterial, if their errand be a warlike one.

But, admitting the point, as respects military men, the great question remains, which the *Trent* affair involves, whether the same reasoning applies to civilians? American jurisprudence seems clearly opposed to such an extension.

Neither Dr. Wheaton in his "Elements of International Law," nor the judges of the Supreme Court in an important case of "the *Commercen*," in which the unneutral act of carrying military passengers was dwelt upon by both the majority and the minority of the Court, give any hint of it. In the negotiations between Great Britain and America in 1804, the first article of the projected treaty, as proposed by the Americans, bore that no person was to be taken out of a ship of either party upon the high seas, "unless such person be at the time in the military service of an enemy." A few years later, Jefferson, in a letter to Mr. Bowdoin, of April 2d, 1807, ("Correspondence," iv. p. 72), looking forward to the "establishment of neutral rights" by a peace, adds expressly, "among which should be that of taking no persons by a belligerent out of a neutral ship, unless they be the soldiers of an enemy."

It seems difficult to me, however, I confess, to distinguish civilian officials on Government service for war purposes, from military persons, so far as the rights of belligerents and duties of neutrals are concerned. In the negotiations above referred to, the article noticed was eventually amended, through English objections, so as to provide simply that neither party while at war should "take from on board the vessels of the other the subjects of the opposite belligerent, unless they should be in the actual service of such belligerent,"—thus embracing the case of both military men and civilians. And Lord Stowell, adverting to the point in a case where it was not necessary to decide it (i.e. where civilians were carried together with military men), said it appeared to him "but reasonable that whenever it is of sufficient importance to the enemy that such persons should be sent out on the public service, at the public expense, it should afford equal ground of forfeiture against a vessel that may be let out for a purpose so intimately connected with the hostile operations." (The *Orozembo*.)

No doubt the above case was that of a voyage virtually to a colony of the belligerent power. No doubt the stoppage of civilians in your enemy's employ, on a *bond fide* voyage between neutral port and neutral port, as in the *Trent* matter, seems wholly unparalleled in the history of international law. No doubt the military character carries with it an inherent notice of warlike purpose, which should only be rebutted by special proof that the soldier's errand happens to be a peaceful one; whilst the civil character is *prima facie* peaceable, and special evidence should be required to prove the warlike purpose. But supposing the warlike purpose to be proved, it seems to me that the unneutral conduct in carrying such persons is as evident, as in carrying military persons themselves. Would it be lawful for Belgium, neutral between belligerent France and England, to allow civilians in the service of either or both, to organize military operations from within

her territory on land? Here again, why should Belgian ships be subject to a different rule?

But now we come across the difficult question of the rights of ambassadors. It is admitted that neutrals have a right to keep up equal friendly relations with either belligerent, subject to the belligerent right of blockade. It is admitted that they may send, receive, and keep ambassadors to, from, and with each. It is admitted that such ambassadors, while within the neutral's territory, are inviolable. It is admitted, as we have seen, that despatches may be lawfully carried by a neutral from the ambassador of a belligerent in a neutral state to the belligerent country, and this on the ground that "it is too much to say that all the business of the two states shall be transacted by the minister of the neutral state, resident in the enemy's country." But on the other hand, Lord Stowell, following Vattel, followed by Phillimore, has expressly said that "you may stop the ambassador of your enemy on his passage."

Are these positions strictly consistent? When a belligerent stops his adversary's ambassador from reaching the neutral state, does he not practically compel "all the business of the two states" to be "transacted by the minister of the neutral" one? If the neutral has a right to receive ambassadors at all, is not that right inchoate from the instant that ambassador sets his foot on board at least that neutral's ship to come to him?

Clearly, then, in the interest of neutrals, the international law on the subject of ambassadors, as well as their despatches, requires to be settled and rendered consistent. The right to stop an ambassador *in transitu*, if to be exercised at all on board a neutral vessel not breaking a blockade, would seem to require limitation by the right of the neutral power to whom such ambassador is accredited, of receiving such ambassador, and thereby of claiming to have him delivered up; a limitation which would apply to every subordinate agent sent to open relations with the neutral government. But the

mission must be a *bond fide* one; the ambassador must not be sent simply to organise war. If he does so, as in the case of the French minister Genet, in the early days of the United States, who used his position as minister in that country to direct hostile operations against England, he clearly puts himself out of the pale of international law, whether at sea or on shore.

I have now endeavoured to glance at the various heads under which rights of search and seizure have been or should be claimed. The question of the protection which may be afforded by a national flag is one much involved with the former ones, yet somewhat overlapping them. There was a time when a right of sanctuary was claimed by ambassadors. It is now admitted that on land no such right generally exists; that a foreign ambassador's flag in a country cannot override the municipal law of that country, so as to screen offenders against it, unless in the persons of the ambassador himself and his followers, who are deemed, by a fiction, "extra territorial." I say "generally exists," because few people can doubt that in countries where municipal law has, properly speaking, no existence, or at times when it is utterly trampled under foot, an ambassador is often morally justified, and would often be supported by his country, in extending the protection of his flag to those who would otherwise fall victims to a despot's caprice, or to the violence of a mob. But such are rather cases of international morality, than of international law. They are governed simply by the broad human principle of sheltering a fellow-creature against unjust violence.

At sea the case is different. There is no need of a fiction of extra-territoriality. The ship is a physical domain of municipal law. Every person who is on board the ship of a particular nation, whether belonging to that nation or not, is subject to the municipal laws of that nation. If he commits an offence there, he is punishable according to those laws, and not according to his own. This being the case—he being *pro tempore* a subject

of the nation whose flag floats over that vessel—it seems but fair that he should be able to claim the benefits, as well as bound to bear the obligations, of his temporary allegiance: that, in short, he should be able to claim the protection of the flag. Of course it is competent for the master of the vessel, considered as the executive authority of the municipal laws of his own country on board, and subject to any civil liabilities for breach of contract, to deliver up or expel the claimant, whenever he might be delivered up or expelled from the country itself. But where the claim of protection is made, and not refused, it is difficult to see how the individual can be separated from the whole ship—how international law can step in between them, to seize the one, and let the other go.

I cannot help thinking, therefore, that, subject to a duly regulated exercise of the right of search and of seizure for unneutral conduct, the principle of absolute protection of persons by a *bonâ fide* neutral flag deserves to be admitted into international law. I say, by a *bonâ fide* neutral flag, as of course the principle could not apply where the hoisting of such flag is merely colourable,—where another municipal law than that it denotes, is really in force on board;—where, in short, the ship is practically in the service of one of the belligerents. In the case of the *Trent*, beyond all question the flag was a *bonâ fide* one,—the ship was a British ship, governed by British municipal law, and the persons of the envoys claiming the protection of the flag should, upon the principles laid down, have been inviolable. But there would be no greater mistake than to suppose that international law, as at present recognised, does in any way cover those principles. The “right of asylum,” of which we hear talk in the matter, has not risen to be more than a comity among nations—a very noble policy pursued by some, who have conscience enough to recognise, and strength enough to fulfil, the common human duty of harbouring the defenceless, until shown unworthy of shelter. The United States have

known well how to assert that alleged right on their own behalf; putting even out of view the *Trent* case, they have now unfortunately shown also in the utterly lawless seizure of ex-senator Gwir and other Confederates on their passage through the neutral territory of the Isthmus of Panama, how ready they are to trample upon it when asserted against them by a Power too weak and defenceless for them to respect.<sup>1</sup>

I have indicated a few of the grave questions of international law which the affair of the *Trent* has raised, and none of which it will certainly have sufficed to settle. Can nothing be done to settle them, otherwise than by the wrangle of diplomatists on each side? Such international law as exists has, in fact, grown up at a time when war, and not peace, was considered as the chief concern of a nation's life. It is only within the present century, it may be said, that the interests of war have been felt to be wholly subordinate to those of peace. Hence international law requires to be revised from that new point of view, of which the neutral is the representative. But the privileges of neutrals require no less to be revised than the rights of belligerents. Hitherto, so entirely has the point of view been one of war, that virtually a state of war has been assumed between the neutral himself and each belligerent, the former being held entitled to do everything that a belligerent did not hinder him from doing. But the secret war carried on by a neutral in fomenting hostilities, under colour of peace, is really an offence against mankind. The interests of all being peace, he injures all by covertly assisting war. The time will

<sup>1</sup> I have not adverted in this paper to the proposal, much agitated of late years, to render all private property inviolable at sea. There is probably more to say upon it than Chambers of Commerce, which have shown themselves so ready to vote upon it, are aware. But it is a question chiefly important as between belligerents; and, dealing only here with those questions which may divide belligerent and neutral, I have felt myself entitled to leave it on one side.

come, I believe, when to carry contraband of war or otherwise knowingly aid a belligerent under a neutral flag, will be held an offence against the law of nations only inferior to piracy, entailing search and seizure by neutral vessels as well as belligerent, and condemnation in any neutral court of Admiralty.

And now, as we have seen, all the nations of Europe are, as they have never been before, united in one interest, and that a neutral one. Why should not they settle once for all—with or without the concurrence of both belligerents or either—the terms upon which the rights of peace shall henceforth be trenched upon by the so-called rights, or rather the alleged necessities, of war? A beginning of that good work was made at the Congress of Paris in 1856. England, by accepting the rule of "free ships, free goods," as respects articles not contraband of war, has shown her willingness for concession. Why not carry the work now further? Why should not a few of the maritime nations, having agreed previously upon a few leading principles or bases of settlement, appoint each a really able jurist as Commissioners to draw up an international "Code of the Sea,"—the respective rights of neutrals and belligerents to form the first subject of consideration,—and with power for the Commissioners to add to their number representative jurists from other maritime states as they may be appointed? The Code once framed might be embodied in a great international treaty, and in the meanwhile might receive force, chapter by chapter, through special conventions, as each state acceded to what was done. From the moment when the bases of settlement were agreed upon, still more from the adoption of any chapter of the Code, the navy of each power should be pledged to the enforcement of the rules laid down on behalf of all powers agreeing to them, so that every neutral trader should feel assured of protection wherever the flag of any neutral man-of-war was flying. Such a system would not have the character of distrust inherent in a so-

called "armed neutrality;" it might possibly lead to the establishment of an international "police force of the seas," the ships affected to which should be inviolable in any war whatsoever.

The work I have sketched out need really not be a difficult or a long one. The Great Exhibition of next year, the approaching meeting of the Social Science Association in London, might be made materially to assist towards its being taken in hand. Assuming that really efficient men were appointed, and at a sufficient rate of remuneration to secure the exercise of all their energies for the time being, six weeks, or two months, ought to be sufficient to give the world some authoritative heads of a "law of search in time of war," which is the main thing required, and a couple of years might probably enable us to see the whole Code framed, together with those authoritative translations into all the maritime languages of Christendom which are essential to its efficacy. And if only the case of the *Trent*, which, while I write, is still but a dark political riddle, by calling attention to many unsettled questions involved in the present "law of the sea," should lead to an authoritative solution of some of them, it may yet be felt that, in the words of another riddle of old, "out of the eater came forth meat, and out of the strong came forth sweetness."

But in the meanwhile? Well, we neutrals must bear and forbear. It is not a pleasant part to play, that of neutral, especially when, like England, you are by no means used to it. To have your merchant-ships stopped and overhauled on every sea by foreign officers—by mere privateers—seldom over-courteous, often not very scrupulous, is decidedly disagreeable. War, it must be admitted, is a terrible nuisance; and, after all, we should be thankful that it makes itself such. For the chorus of grumbling which it awakes from every captain, ship-owner, merchant, whose ship has been delayed, whose expenditure has been increased, whose profit has been diminished, by a stoppage for search, or a *détour* to avoid

such stoppage, swelling as it is sure to do year after year, must help greatly in course of time to stun and paralyse the very belligerents. But we must remember that—not to speak of older times—in the days of our own fathers we inflicted at all events the maritime portion of the war-*nuisance*, for the better part of a quarter-century, on all the nations of the civilized world, and that none suffered at our hands as neutrals more acutely than they whose belligerent doings we are now complaining of. We must remember that at no time are men's passions more violent than during the struggle of a doubtful civil war, such as that now raging between the two fractions of the late American Union; and as bystanders, we shall do well to make allowance for these passions, and not to be carried away by them. We must remember, that owing to the monopoly of federal office held almost without intermission since the very formation of the Union by the party who have now led off the secession of the South, the men now in office at Washington are raw hands, ill-prepared by stump oratory, electioneering factions, or even the governorship of single states, for the functions which they have to fulfil; and we shall do well to make allowance for their inexperience. We must remember that, demoralized as it has been by the long ascendancy of the slave power, the North has not yet even risen to a clear perception of its own standing-ground—that the party now in office simply represents the negative principle of resistance to the slave power, many of its members being really mere free-soil filibusters instead of pro-slavery ones; and we shall do well to make allowance for the low morality of this New York *stratum* of the republican party—this mere topmost drift of spouters and intriguers, who share with, I believe, more sterling elements (the President himself included) the direction of the present American Cabinet. Trusting, as I do, that the present crisis of our great sister nation across the Atlantic is a crisis, not of dissolution and death,

but of new birth—believing, as I do, that the tremendous necessities of a gigantic struggle will gradually purge away the dross, and bring to the surface the more solid and nobler portions of the nation,—I trust, also, that we shall know how to forbear towards it. Our journalists seemed never to have done enough in sermonizing the American people as to their folly in falling out together; as to the horrors of a fratricidal strife between the members of a kindred race; as to the absurdity of their mutual outbursts of violence. The South might bombard Sumter; take sudden possession of all the Federal property which it could lay hold of; commission privateers; threaten the Capitol. Still, in England, the doves of the broadsheets went on cooing to the North of peace. Now, a single utterly bloodless “outrage upon the British flag” has been committed without authority by a notoriously hasty-tempered officer; and because that act is not instantly disavowed, but is lauded by American folly, every dove is turned into a raven, and our nation is not only told to prepare for war, but is, from some quarters, actually hounded on to it. I do not say that, if the Commissioners were not released, war would not be for England a dread necessity. But I say that that war would be at least as great a folly, very nearly as true a fratricide, as the civil war between North and South—I believe that to some extent it would be even more so. I believe there are large tracts of country in these islands, whose relations of kindred with the North are closer and more multiplied than those of the North itself with the South. It has been truly said, that in our manufacturing districts there is scarcely a family which has not some member in America; and I believe there are more Englishmen, Irishmen, and Scotchmen at the North (in which I include the whole present United States), than there are Northerners at the South, or Southerners at the North. And I believe that the true North—the old Puritan North of the Pilgrim Fathers—the North that works and



fight while others loaf and spout (alas! even in Boston itself)—is far more genuinely akin to us in feelings, in morality, in cultivation, than it is to the slave-owners, slave-drivers, and "poor whites" of the South.

Let us then hope, pray, work, that this dreadful doom of war between England and America may be averted. Let us allow no Napoleonic cunning or perfidy, acting through foreign or easily disavowed French journals, after egging us on to that war, to take advantage of it for the greater glory and profit of French neutrality; in order that, when our blows have operated as a diversion in favour of the South, it may hold us up to the scorn of the world as the hypocrite nation that paid twenty millions to emancipate 800,000 West Indian slaves, and double that amount or more to rivet the chains of four millions of Southern ones;—in order that, if occasion suit, it may join the North in the struggle, to the war-cry of "France and freedom," against "England and slavery." Let us endeavour ourselves to keep neutral, that our cause may be that of the civilized world. Let us endeavour, by every act of forbearance consistent with national honour, to avoid every measure which should help to prolong the existence of slavery. And if, indeed, the chains of the black man should burst asunder, and in the wild frenzy of a freedom he has been rendered unfit to use, the very cotton-plant should be rooted up from American soil, let us turn the more gladly to that glorious empire which God has consigned to our charge in the far East; and as we develop more and more its unlimited resources for the production of every tropical staple, as we apply more and more our own mechanical and scientific ingenuity towards rendering its produce available for manufacturing purposes at home, let us thank God that He has at last released us,—though at the cost, no doubt, of much temporary suffering, which we should one and all do our best to alleviate,—from being any more, as consumers, virtual accomplices in the continued perpetration of a great wrong.

I began by saying that I wrote these pages on the assumption that the solution of the "*Trent* difficulty" would be a peaceable one. I should have nothing to unsay, if it were a bloody one. A war between England and the United States cannot last long; and if, as is most likely, it should lead to the bolstering up of a peace between the two fractions of the Union, that peace cannot last (as I have before endeavoured to show in this periodical), so long as the cause of dissension, slavery, is not removed. Until that takes place, again and again will the war between North and South break out; again and again will England find herself placed in the position of a neutral betwixt belligerents, again and again will the need be keenly felt of a definite "Code of the Sea."

But if, indeed, the solution be peaceable, I must here express my hope, in opposition to what I know is the general feeling of this country, that in spite of the past, England will be in no haste to recognise, otherwise than as she has done, in the qualified character of a mere belligerent, the Southern Confederacy. Whatever the *Times* may say, no thinking man can look at the present state of things and say that that body is not far less entitled to recognition from foreign countries now, than it was six months ago. Then, the blockade was indeed a paper one; now, the vaunt made by President Davis of the application of Southern citizens to manufactures, shows clearly how real it is; whilst the surprise excited by the occasional arrival of a cotton ship at Havre, of a turpentine ship at Liverpool, proves equally the fact. Then, the Federal flag had ceased to be in North Carolina, in South Carolina, in Georgia. Now it flies in all three states: forty-five counties of North Carolina have been represented in a Union Convention, Savannah and Charleston are both threatened from Port Royal, and new expeditions are yet preparing. Through the successive lodgments effected at Fortress Monroe, Cape Hatteras, Hilton Head, and now Tybee Island, the Federals have secured the actual control of almost



the entire Western sea-board, and a few more such blows to the South will give them the command of the whole coastline. In such a state of things—though the great army of the North be not yet in motion, and the Western campaign seems to have resulted in strengthening the Confederacy,—yet the latter is at best

but a sort of huge unwilling Paraguay, cut off from all intercourse with foreign nations. To recognise that Confederacy now, before it has shown the strength to clear for itself a single line of coast, would be an act of pique, not of policy or of justice.

## PASSING EVENTS.—THE CONSERVATIVE REACTION.

If the epitaph of the year 1861 were to be written, most people would agree that it might be written very briefly as far as this country is concerned. Both in politics and in religion it has been set down by general consent as a year of Conservative reaction. Whether England be well or ill governed, whether the Church is lost in spiritual darkness or walking in spiritual light, England and the Church are at all events content with the *status quo*. The din of Parliamentary rivalries scarce has penetrated of late beyond the walls of St. Stephen's into the healthy open air. The question of the enlargement of the Franchise has rocked itself to sleep. Everywhere the country enjoys an almost monotonous political repose, broken only here and there by the tinkle of some ruminating statesman or the distant cry of a melancholy Reformer. The terrible Mr. Bright himself—the Black Douglas, at whose name country gentlemen grow pale—has been infected with the epidemic tranquillity, and the House of Lords been allowed, this autumn and winter, to shoot, hunt, and dine in peace. As for the religious world, it presents a somewhat similar aspect. Unorthodoxy, which, at the beginning of spring, seemed likely to give the theological public no little trouble, as the days shortened, retired again into its own studious corner. Mr. Bright is not more completely put out of court in general estimation than these bold thinkers, who drew upon themselves the random fire of religious circles at the beginning of the year. One watchword has been

passed down the ranks, both as to politics and theology—to let well alone. *Nolumus leges, nolumus deos Anglica mutari*. Reformers and non-Reformers alike are inclined to believe in a Conservative reaction. The cry has at last become so loud, that it behoves sane people to see if it be well-founded. Are we going forwards, or are we going backwards, or, lastly, are we standing still?

Those who are immediately implicated in the fortunes of either Parliamentary party may exaggerate to themselves, we think, the importance of the reaction—if a reaction there be. To a certain class of politicians, whose interest in politics is nothing more or less than an interest in the division-list of the House of Commons, the country may well seem to be retrograding. Lord Palmerston, the strength of whose policy lies in its heartiness and sympathy with popular feeling, might always be confirmed in power by a foreign war, or even by continental disorder. Otherwise, it must be confessed that the Derbyite government are nearer office than they were. While we have been busy over the course of events in Italy or America, the Tories have stolen a march upon Downing-street. The gods of the Whigs are intently watching the battles on the windy plains of Troy, and the country gentlemen have almost climbed unnoticed into Olympus. Birkenhead and South Lancashire, and especially the latter, are regarded in some quarters, as not only important, but as significant losses to the Liberal cause.

When parties are so evenly balanced in the House, a single vote is not to be despised, and an adverse election may have as depressing an effect on the spirits of the ministerial supporters, as an adverse division itself. Once at least, last session, the equilibrium of the Parliamentary ship was only preserved by a rush, at the last moment, of neutral and indifferent spectators in the centre to the threatened side. A brilliant budget from Mr. Gladstone, whose budgets excite Parliamentary opposition in exact proportion to their ability, might this spring upset the Cabinet for good. The tone of confidence in their coming greatness, which never, indeed, deserts the leaders of the Conservatives, is at present more than usually strong; and a stray borough, which now and then comes drifting in to them, is the seaweed which announces to the adventurous mariners that they are nearing the promised land. Lord Derby may not win the race, but he is certainly once more in the running.

We are of opinion that this gain is more apparent than real, and that England is not necessarily less progressive because the country party in the House is preparing itself—it may be prematurely—to be summoned to the Treasury Benches. The reason why the Tory vessel is sailing in upon us so successfully, is that it has carefully hauled down everything like Tory colours. Upon matters of home policy there is little difference between them and their rivals. On foreign questions, their two greatest statesmen, Sir Lytton Bulwer and Lord Stanley, have made speeches about which there is but little of the old Tory ring, while their greatest tactician, Mr. Disraeli, prudently on such subjects takes refuge in his shell of diplomatic reserve. Lord Derby, indeed, has spoken on Italy with less discretion; but discretion is not supposed to be the *forte* of the Rupert of Debate, nor are the ideas of one or two aristocratical leaders of the Derbyite host shared on these points with their less fashionable comrades or their followers. There is a nameless social something, which prevents men like Lord Malmesbury and

Lord Derby from taking the popular and the true view of Italian affairs, and inclines them, like Lord Normanby, to sympathise with Grand Ducalism and gentility. But the popular fibre runs more strongly through the most powerful bulwarks of the future Tory cabinet. Little, probably, except filial piety, divides Lord Stanley from the Liberals or Semi-Liberals of the day. Sir Lytton Bulwer, but for his literary sensibilities, if he had not been a philosophical Conservative, would certainly be a philosophical Radical. It is true that Lord Stanley's creed on the subject of Hungary was less bold and less advanced. This was a graceful concession to the weaknesses of his father's supporters. There can now be little doubt that the Conservatives will go as far as popular feeling compels them. Nobody, however, can expect that they should go farther, or perform works of supererogation to mortify themselves. The cause of Hungary has not yet been called on at the bar of Europe. A theory upon the Hungarian question is therefore as practically unimportant as a theory on the rival claims of Denmark and Slesvig-Holstein. Lord Stanley's hesitation simply proved that the party whose good opinion he was bound to consult have no notion of being more progressive than they can help.

On all subjects of foreign policy the Conservative chariot, then, either keeps pace with the Liberal coach, or may be heard rumbling on in the same direction from a little distance behind. In domestic politics both are pretty nearly standing side by side, for the truth is that both are standing still. The only difference between them is, that the one is anxious to get on, and the other is only too happy to be permitted to rest its weary wheels. Until the country gives the signal, it is not necessary for the one to move, or for the other to refuse. It may be taken for granted that the country is in no hurry to decide on action. All things considered, even those of us who do not govern themselves are apparently as well governed as they care to be, or

are ignorant at least that they might be governed better. But the grand cause of our apathy upon internal questions is that our whole attention is riveted on what is passing abroad. We are the interested spectators of great events. The Corn laws had not long been repealed, when it became evident that home politics no longer were to be the all-absorbing study that they hitherto had been. Up to that date we had been stirring, and Europe had been motionless for a time. But with the advent of free trade all imperious necessity for internal change subsided throughout the kingdom. Nearly at the same moment the Continent, which for years had enjoyed repose, was once more visited by a political earthquake; which, though less terrible than its great predecessor of sixty years before, was still sufficiently violent to arrest all eyes, and to shake a great portion of the civilized world. Since the commencement of 1848, our situation has been reversed. Till then we were actors in a drama of our own; we have become the audience at greater tragedies enacted by our neighbours. The newspapers, so long read chiefly for the sake of their political manifestoes and their domestic intelligence, now were important as the vehicles for conveying to us the contemporary history of the Continent. Paris, Vienna, Constantinople, and Turin, grew to be centres of political interest, which drew away the thoughts of practical Englishmen from their own more immediate concerns. Nor has our excitement been to us a mere excitement of the imagination. The history of the Continent for the last decade, touching ourselves so closely as it does, has been much more to us than a mere thrilling romance. Our possession of India, and of the chain of communicating outposts which run from India to the Mediterranean and Gibraltar, gives us, unhappily it may be, too much reason to be interested in European complications. Our proximity to France compels us to follow, with fascinated eyes, each movement of that powerful, dangerous, and feverish empire. It is idle to talk of household and domestic reform when

Europe is in flames, or threatening us with the explosion of sullen and pent-up volcanic forces. *Jam proximus ardet Ucalegon*. Safety to-day; purity of election, and extension of the franchise, can afford to wait till to-morrow.

Mr. Bright, who, if he is often unwise in the means he adopts, at least knows the nature of the obstacles with which he has to contend, sees perfectly that it is hopeless to inoculate with the fever of reform agitation a patient from whom the intense interest of foreign politics has driven out all minor political excitements. Napoleon III., by way of withdrawing the minds of his fiery subjects from home, feeds them with the intoxicating spectacle of continual disturbance beyond their frontier. Conversely, the Apostle of reform is aware that, before he can interest the nation in the task of reforming itself, he must succeed in calming the interest it takes in the affairs of Europe. He has hit two of the right nails upon the head. India and France are, as he correctly judges, the sources of a great portion of that keen unrest which attracts our eyes from home, and fixes them abroad: and he acts consistently with himself in endeavouring in the one case to cut away the cause of our alarm, in the other to persuade us that our alarm is foolish. Without entering into the question whether the Eastern policy of Lord Palmerston is, or is not, a policy of mere obstruction and temporary shift, we may fairly say, that as regards France, Mr. Bright labours under a dangerous, and, fortunately, a singular delusion. The second Empire has conferred some benefits, if not on France, at least on the rest of Europe, and there is no necessity for either underrating or overrating their value. But France, in any aspect of the case, stands beside us with drawn sword, an armed and ambitious missionary. Mr. Bright has chosen the wrong season to persuade us that we can afford to look away from this restless neighbour, and to devote our entire energies to mastering the Manchester theory of the British Constitution. In declining to do so, England is not

espousing the cause of reaction, but simply acting upon an instinct of self-preservation.

But, were her own safety and fortunes not indirectly involved, the paramount interest of the scenes which are passing before her gaze would be sufficient to justify the indifference which England displays for almost everything except European questions. We are entering on another cycle : and "the world's great age" seems to be "beginning anew" even if the "golden years" are not returning. Religious preachers exclaim, as they have done in every generation, that the end of all things is at hand, but to an unbiassed eye it would rather appear as if all things were commencing afresh, and the earth had begun to spin at railroad speed down a new and untried groove. With the first French Revolution a fresh page was turned in the history of civilization. The old heavens and the old earth passed away, and a new heaven and a new earth supplied their place. New principles, new theories of society and human rights, new truths and new errors, were let loose upon France, and, thanks partly to the universality of the French language, and partly to the irresistible *elan* of the French character, vibrated through Europe, till Europe shook again. Weary of an old civilization, which had been a kind of fortuitous growth out of heterogeneous and discordant elements, an important part of the Continent endeavoured to fling off all law, all social tradition, all order which could not be explained deductively from some simple and logical first principles, to undo the knots which ages had been tying, to return, if necessary, to a fictitious state of primitive simplicity, and upon a logical basis to begin the work of constructing the world over again. The Treaty of Vienna and the Holy Alliance surprised these new world-makers before their task was finished. The gods of a classical civilization succeeded for a time in vanquishing the brawny Titans of a more vigorous and mundane birth. Apollo and Minerva overcame and bound Typhæus and Briareus. It was not for

many years that the giants who, in 1815, seemed buried for ever under mountains, were able successfully to re-emerge into the upper air : a saddened, a sobered, and a wiser crew. Once more, another Paris Revolution set going the problems, which as yet had been mooted, but never solved in the first : and European order set to work to refashion itself. New and unknown phenomena, great forces of which the world was little conscious, spring up into sight. Questions of nationalities, of the will of the people, of universal suffrage, arise and lock themselves one with the other, producing complexities innumerable, compared with which all questions as to forms of government seem of minor moment. Society, which since the French Revolution has discovered the steam engine and the telegraph, finds that the new and gigantic opportunities for centralization thereby introduced, increase all our political difficulties and dangers a hundredfold. In a word, Europe is experimentalising on herself, and on those new weapons for self-decomposition, or instruments for self-cultivation, which have been put into her hands.

It is true, that England is a spectator of these things, and takes no part in the ordeal of analysis ; but there is no reason to suppose that she is not learning and profiting by what she sees. We are not a creative nation, like the Italians ; we are not a nation which pushes everything to its logical conclusion, like the French. We are a nation that clings tenaciously to the past : we are drawn slowly and reluctantly into the agitating vortex of new social opinions : we are fonder of legal fictions than of imaginary logical axioms, and unfitted altogether to reconstruct society from given philosophical premises. It is said, and pertinaciously said—because, suddenly occupied with the sight of what is stirring abroad, we are doing little or nothing at home—that England is passing through a phase of reaction. That this country has been forcibly struck with the evil results of pushing to their conclusion some of the principles laid down by democratic thinkers, needs no showing.

But there is a double lesson to be drawn from all great events, and we do not see why Conservatism should suppose that England is only drawing half of it. The first French Revolution retarded the first Reform Bill. But no one who has observed the effect of that great convulsion can doubt its influence upon English Liberalism. The events of the last twelve years, in like manner, are affecting Englishmen in two distinct and different ways. For the moment they are rendering us disinclined to take any decided onward step. But, meanwhile, the country, from land's end to land's end, is unconsciously imbibing broad, manly, and liberal opinions.

Much of our just hesitation to embark at once on the perilous seas of extreme Radicalism may be traced to a prevalent feeling, that we have seen Radicalism tried and have seen it fail. France, as it is said, has proved to us that the tyranny of the one follows naturally upon the tyranny of the many. America shows conclusively that the tyranny of the many is as bad as the tyranny of the one. Nor are we content to ascribe to democracy merely its own inherent defects. Democratical institutions are considered enough to account for every ill that flesh is heir to. Universal suffrage bears its own and other people's burdens. Thus, even the American civil war is set down as a flagrant instance of what we may expect to come to if we lower the suffrage in our large towns, and every American filibuster who misconducts himself upon the high seas is regarded as a frightful example of the results of voting by ballot.

A popular preacher of the day, who assiduously takes upon himself to explain the ways of Providence, regards the cholera as an heaven-inflicted evil, flowing immediately from Catholic emancipation, and the passing of the Maynooth grant. Adopting this kind of reasoning, anything may no doubt be explained by anything. But, though the world of literary politicians is too fond of accounting for all foreign calamities by the fact that the institutions of foreigners differ from

their own, we are justified by the aspect of American affairs in pausing before we take any leap into the dark. America must accordingly bear the imputation of having fairly brought into some disrepute and odium universal suffrage, the ballot, and large constituencies. As for large constituencies, the horror in which they are held is perhaps unnecessary. Our metropolitan members are not ideal statesmen. Finsbury and Marylebone are not abodes of political innocence, but likely to be the walk for many years of successful Old Bailey barristers, or of triumphant insecticides, and to borrow what little respectability either may acquire from the occasional election of—at most—a retired alderman. But Finsbury and Marylebone represent a large class who have only since the Reform Bill known what it is to enjoy political life. These cannot be expected to emerge at once from the stage of political mollusks into the stage of highly-organised politicians. They will only learn to use political privileges rightly after being allowed for some little time to abuse them. Still, in spite of all, large constituencies will probably long remain unpopular, and each successive instance of electoral folly will increase this unpopularity. Though over-fastidiousness may lead us to be unnecessarily indignant with, and want of confidence in the future of society to despair of, monster constituencies, we can hardly be said upon these subjects to be undergoing a "reaction."

A moment's consideration of the method by which the so-called "reaction" has been brought about, will demonstrate that, whatever it be, it is certainly not a "*Conservative*" reaction. It has not been caused by the Conservatives. All that the Conservatives have had to do, has been to make no noise, and not provoke a counter-reaction, by showing undesirable symptoms of life. If Lord Derby returns to office, he has to thank not the activity of his partisans—though their activity has not been less because they have been silent—he has to thank that portion of the edu-



cated classes whose opinions proceed from a kind of political dyspepsia. It is natural that the majority of the literary order should view with dislike any further addition to the power of the body below them. The Semi-Liberals belong neither to the upper nor to the lower ranks; neither to the sons of heaven nor to the sons of earth. They are themselves kept back from power and distinction by the aristocracy above; they fear to be swamped altogether by the democracy below. Let us sympathise with the dilemma. It is perhaps difficult to say with whom they should unite. Years ago their course was not so difficult to steer. They devoted their keen swords to the service of Reform; led the van of Liberalism; and contributed not a little to turn the tide of public opinion into its present channel. In the palmy days of the *Edinburgh*, the most influential of the educated literary class were Liberals. Like the Whigs, they have since discovered that the champions of an oppressed cause sink into minor importance when the victory is won. Partly, too, it may be, a qualm of suspicion has come upon them as to the nature of the work they have been accomplishing. They thought they were labouring to remove a mill-dam, and lo! the Atlantic is upon them. Hesitatingly and tremblingly they determine to go no further. Mr. Bright is noisy and violent. The crowd which seemed pleasant to lead, is vulgar and offensive to mix with. The old waters of Abana and Pharpar are better after all.

There is much truth in the gloomy reflections of the Semi-Liberals. Those who have seen anything of the English middle and lower classes know that they are constituted by nature to accept an aristocracy of birth, and to rebel against all aristocracies of talent. The thinkers who most influence working men are not the thinkers who think most clearly, but those who think most strongly. At a certain feverish crisis in the progress of society, knowledge ceases to be necessarily power. The tumultuous fires of rhetoric and personal force melt to a

white heat the souls of the great masses, whom the clearer flame of science, economy, and learning cannot affect. The alarm of the Semi-Liberals, then, though excessive, is not unnatural. They undertook to sow the wind, and they find that they were well-nigh sowing a whirlwind. But, whether their alarm be excessive or justifiable, it must not be forgotten that no reaction caused by such men as these could fairly or without grave qualification be called a Conservative reaction. At best it is not a Conservative reaction, it is a political pause. For those who have been instrumental in effecting it are not to be confounded with the advocates of abuse. Their temporal interests are on the side of moderate progress. Their intellectual bias is in favour of freedom in everything, but especially of *free thought*. They have fought in days gone by, and are ready to contend again, for civil and religious liberty. They refuse to give their goodwill to the established order of things, when it has produced nothing but despotism and corruption. Italy, Hungary, Poland—these are the causes that consistently receive their sympathy and their support. Men like these may be timid and mistaken, but they never can be reactionaries.

England this last year has been pausing with them: but a great people cannot be said to be retrograding which is hourly drinking in all the lessons that experience can teach it. We are not rowing against wind and tide, or endeavouring to remount whence we have descended. We are resting on our oars—intent on the sights and sounds around us: and the great stream is bearing us gently and happily along upon its bosom. For it would be untrue to say that, because we make no conscious movement onward, our thoughts are not changing, growing, ripening. The country is gradually learning to understand, and here and there to sympathise with, the aspirations and ideas of other countries which are widely unlike our own. We are more tolerant towards forms of government which differ from ours. Universal suffrage, if it has be-



come almost a joke, has ceased at all events to be a bugbear. The ballot seems to thinking statesmen no longer to be a monstrosity, but to be merely a mistake. The antiquated and sentimental notion of the Divine right of kings, which long ago was beaten into silence, has at last nearly disappeared even from our pulpits. A new Divine right has made its way upon the stage, with the evident intention of replacing the old—the Divine right of the "*fait accompli*." We are gradually learning to comprehend that the voice of the people, if it is seldom the voice of God, is generally a voice that makes itself heard at last. We now see that a nation's resolute will, noble self-control, and moral strength, may win for it prizes which its armies could never have won, and Order and Law may lift their heads higher at the sight of revolution itself submitting to their own mild sway. Light has been thrown on the relations subsisting between subjects and their sovereign. The political value of social distinctions—the world's most important problem—is being tested at one and the same time in many places: and, whatever its solution, it can hardly fail to be without some influence on English minds. From France itself in the last two months we have received a solemn recognition of the value of constitutional government from the mouth of the most unconstitutional of monarchs. The country, it seems, is quietest and governed most cheaply where the people tax themselves; and it has been reserved for a foreign despot practically to remind us of the old maxim, that Peace, Retrenchment, and Reform, are three sisters who go hand in hand. The questions regarding capital and labour are likely to be solved in England sooner even than elsewhere, except, perhaps, in Italy; but the state of Paris and the South of France may recall to our recollection the unsentimental and homely truth, that, if the capitalist does not invariably understand his true interests, the labourer is not the best judge of what is good for labour, and that the laws of Political Economy are not al-

ways successfully slighted. This, and far more than this, the great majority of Englishmen have been learning during the last two years; and the years in which they have been so occupied cannot with propriety be termed years of reaction.

That 1861 has been a year of religious reaction is equally untrue. It has, indeed, been in England a year of considerable theological excitement. "*Essays and Reviews*," a now famous volume, which was published in the spring of 1860, at the commencement of last winter began to fall into the hands of the bishops and country clergy. Great agitation followed in all parts of the country; and a storm of invectives, arguments, and confutation, was directed against the clerical writers who had taken part in its composition. We are not now concerned with the merits or demerits of the work, the opinions contained in which were at the time no novelties to many educated men. But at first it seemed likely that great injustice would be done to the authors by society at large. They were treated by many as if they were the preachers of some Methodist congregation of Little Bethel, who were paid only to teach what their audience chose; instead of being the ministers of a great and generous national Church, which, if its ministers could discover a new truth, would claim to share it with them. It was said, and said intemperately, that the Essayists were bound to leave the pale before they promulgated views contrary to the opinions of their fellow-Churchmen. It would have been as wise and as just to insist that a man who was accused of a crime which he denied, should spontaneously try, condemn, and execute himself. By the customs of Japan a notorious offender is required to disembowel himself. It would be too much, every time an English incumbent passed through a phase of thought which he imagined inconsistent with his subscription to the Articles, that he should be considered a dishonoured man unless at once, and without waiting to be judged,

he performed this Japanese ceremony on his own person. Every man has a right to be relieved from the responsibility of being critic in his own case. No man is bound as a matter of honour to commit ecclesiastical suicide, or to anticipate a verdict of the law courts on his own views. Were it not so, a clergyman of talent and education would be driven into becoming a theological hypochondriac, eternally watching his own health, and examining the pulse of his own orthodoxy.

Our middle classes are sincerely attached to a few extremely popularised formulas which represent to their eyes the Christian faith. The Church since the last century has become less learned, though, at the same time, she has perhaps become more practical and active. The mass of her members have never heard of one half the controversies and dogmas for which there was formerly ample room within her bosom. That there should be a burst of excitement on the publication by clergymen of half a dozen disquieting Essays, was, then, extremely natural. It was true that many who abused, had never read them. One of the most extraordinary religious peculiarities of Englishmen of the middle classes, is, that they are perfectly willing to condemn all reputed heretics unheard. Lord Shaftesbury, whose name will be ennobled for his philanthropy's, not his learning's sake, either distinctly asserts that "Essays and Reviews" are the organs of infidelity, or else distinctly encourages the uneducated audience whom he is addressing, in the delusion that they are as good judges of a polemical point as the divines and scholars of the Church. He protests against the tyranny of professors, much in the same way as Hyde Park orators protest against the tyranny of political economy. He is quite prepared to have the questions raised in "Essays and Reviews" settled by himself and the working-men of England, without any appeal to dictionaries, histories, or commentators. In Indian literature it is understood and

believed that Sanscrit, the superior language, is the language of gods and men. Prakrit, the inferior dialect, is the dialect of women and benevolent genii. Lord Shaftesbury apparently thinks that benevolent genii can do not only with an inferior language, but without knowledge of language altogether.

Happily, few educated Englishmen think on these subjects like Lord Shaftesbury. Protestantism, which implies the right of private judgment, does not fortunately imply that all private judgments are equally valuable. Appeals to popular passion and ignorance are everywhere beginning to be condemned. The agitation which seemed at first somewhat like a reaction against the right of free speech and free thought has almost passed away. People are ready to acknowledge that the Essayists should be met either on the fair field of argument, or on the impartial arena of a law court. While we write, the trial of an Essayist, deservedly, perhaps, the most unpopular, is actually pending. Whatever the wisdom of the Bishop of Salisbury's move, none can complain of its injustice. It is just and fair; law alone should decide whether a legal barrier has been overstepped. Whatever be the judgment of the law, the country will accept it in a spirit of liberality and toleration. Among the intelligent and educated there cannot now-a-days be a religious reaction; for religion stands in need of none. Among the less wise and the less tolerant, whatever opinions prevail, we may look to see an increasing love of justice and of fair play. A recent act of academical and pedantic bigotry, by which the most distinguished of the Essayists was deprived of his hard-earned salary as Greek Professor on account of his opinions, was deservedly reprobated by public opinion, and by all the better portion of the press. In a word, Britain is not reactionary, because she desires above all things to know the truth and to be just.

## THE DEATH OF THE PRINCE CONSORT.

THE removal, by death, of the man of most public station in Great Britain, would, at any time, be an event of national concern. But, when the exalted person so removed is such a man as the late Prince Consort, and when the time of his removal is such a time as the present, the feeling may well be as deep as the appointed signs of it will be extensive. It is not only that we must all be impressed by the thought that one of the highest rank in the realm has been struck down at the age of forty-two, in the full strength and comeliness of manhood. It is not only that the sympathy with family-grief, which we all yield whenever, within our own circles, we hear of the death of a good husband and father, will naturally be yielded, in larger measure than usual and over the whole land, when it is in the royal halls of Windsor that death has made the blank, and the lady so suddenly widowed is our honoured Sovereign, and the children left fatherless are those princes and princesses in whose characters and fortunes, from him who is the youthful heir to the throne down to the smallest prattler in the nursery, we and our posterity are collectively interested. There is more than this in the death of the Prince Consort.

Flattery attends the great; but so also does the crabbed suspicion that the great are flattered. Hence it may well be that, if sometimes a person in royal station is credited with more ability and worth than he possesses, at other times such a person may have to work against peculiar difficulties, and may not have his real merits so readily allowed as if they had been shown in less conspicuous circumstances. In the present age of the world it is perhaps against the grain with most of us to believe that a prince may be a superior man. The old kind of loyalty has so gone out, and the opposite, or the affectation of the oppo-

site, is so common, that, in the case of a person of princely rank, we positively require greater evidence of trustworthiness than would satisfy us in other cases, before we yield that true respect in our private thoughts and our private talk which is so different a thing from ceremonious flexure of the body in public. Perhaps only the most gently-constituted minds are so free from the dread of sycophancy, as to be able, in such cases, to avoid the contrary error of churlishness.

That, notwithstanding all this, it should have been long a conviction, with those who had the best means of judging, that the late Prince Consort was really no ordinary man, but one whom natural endowment and culture, not less than the chance of position, had fitted for an influential part in affairs, and that this conviction should, of recent years, have been extending itself beyond the inner circles of British society and becoming a national tenet, are facts which argue that the conviction must have been well founded. His late Royal Highness came among us young and unknown, a prince from one of those German courts with which our relations of this sort had not been always fortunate. While making his reputation, and, in part, forming his character here, he had to labour under the disadvantage of being required to exercise, first of all, virtues which are merely negative. Not so much to act as to abstain from action, was what a natural British jealousy, never without lynx-eyed representatives, demanded, more especially at the outset, from the German Consort of our Sovereign. To have answered expectations in this respect as Prince Albert did answer them was much in itself. Abundantly creditable it would have been to the deceased Prince if we could now say nothing more of him than that, with

exemplary tact and dignity, he had, for two and twenty years, borne the honours and enjoyed the pleasures of his high rank, not starting aside in extravagant courses, nor causing such scandal and perplexity as, had they so come, it would have been easier to resent than to remedy. When we think of what might have been, had our sovereign's choice of a partner been less happy, this may seem much. Positive virtues, certain sound and manly qualities, were required even for such negative excellence in so high a station. But to our notion of a man entitled, in the more perfect degree, to our respect and consideration, something more largely and decidedly positive is requisite. We ask that a man should have his own thoughts about things, that he should have a will and predilections of his own, that there should be something characteristic about him, affecting the society in which he lives and affecting it beneficially. In this respect Prince Albert far transcended that standard of mere royal non-offensiveness with which we might have been contented. It was impossible to see him in any place of public resort—in the royal box at the Opera, listening good-humouredly to Ronconi, with his children around him, or at a conversazione of the Royal Society, examining a model of the Whitworth cannon and asking questions respecting it—without inferring, from his appearance, that he was a man of acute and strong intelligence, as capable as any within the whole circle of the British aristocracy of acting a well-reasoned part, and as likely, if there were occasion, to act it resolutely. One even fancied that, at the rouse of some not impossible juncture of affairs, that brain and head might turn out, in some less reserved manner than hitherto, to be of importance to the nation. Then, we had only to remember of what stock he came, and how carefully he had been educated as a German student, to be aware that such an inference might probably be correct. But in aid of all this there were confirmations on every hand, settling the matter as far as it could be settled. No one, it

appears, ever came in contact with his Royal Highness without carrying away an impression of his superior capacity and attainments; and the multiplicity of such impressions, made upon different kinds of persons, and sent by them through society, had amounted, in the end, to a considerable and still growing item in British public opinion. Now, to have been such a man, and to have done justice to such marked personal qualifications, so that they could have scope and assert themselves, without any transgression of limits which even the most scrupulous constitutionalism could reasonably find fault with, was a noteworthy solution of the problem of a life. The late Prince Consort solved it with remarkable skill and persistency. No one can say of him that he was merely a cipher who satisfied by abstinence from offence. He chalked out a career for himself which the nation was willing to see him adopt and our institutions made legitimate, which was a career of great public effect and utility, to which there was really some need that a man of high rank and accomplishments should devote himself in this country, and in which none could have done so much as precisely the Consort-Royal. He was not an idle man. His days were full of occupations, of business of his own, and of engagements with others punctually kept. It was impossible that he should not be interested in our politics, and especially in our political connexions with Germany and the rest of the Continent; and we should think less of him if we did not believe that what he felt and thought on such subjects he found means of honestly and yet discreetly expressing where his views might be of weight. But from our party-politics in any public way he stood consistently and judiciously detached; and the work which he made his own, and which the nation was glad to see him making his own, was that larger kind of political work, unclaimed by either Whiggism or Toryism as such, which consists in the promotion of enlightened modes of thinking, and of recognised measures of social improve-

ment. Here the part he took in suggesting and bringing about the Great Exhibition of the Works of Industry of all Nations, gives him a title even to originality and to the chief invention of a method of international education the developments of which are not yet exhausted; and, on the whole, he did so much and did it so well that we now think of him not as the foreign Prince who came among us two and twenty years ago, but as a naturalized Briton who understood us and our ways, had made our interests his own, and so conducted himself as to win honour for himself and confer additional dignity on our Queen.

There is a melancholy interest now in turning over those printed speeches of Prince Albert on public occasions which are as yet the only literary memorial of his activity. They are models of what such things, from such a speaker, ought to be—singularly neat and concise, always hitting the exact nail of the occasion on the head, and generally distinguished not only by their practical good sense, but also, so far as that slight and formal style of composition will permit, by a vein of speculative meaning not usual in British orations of the same order. Here are a few passages which seem characteristic:—

*At a meeting of the Society for Improving the Condition of the Labouring Classes, May 18, 1848:—*"Depend upon it, the interests of classes too often contrasted are identical, and it is only ignorance which prevents them from uniting for each other's advantage. To dispel that ignorance, to show how man can help man, notwithstanding the complicated state of civilized society, ought to be the aim of every philanthropic person; but it is more particularly the duty of those who, under the blessing of Divine Providence, enjoy station, wealth and education."

*At the Lord Mayor's Banquet in London, March 21, 1850, in anticipation of the Great Exhibition:—*"Gentlemen! I conceive it to be the duty of every educated person closely to watch and study the time in which he lives, and, as far as in him lies, to add his humble mite of individual exertion to further the accomplishment of what he believes Providence to have ordained. Nobody, however, who has paid any attention to the peculiar features of our present era, will doubt for a moment that we are living at a period of most wonderful transition,

which tends rapidly to accomplish that great end to which, indeed, all history points; the realization of the Unity of mankind! Not a unity which breaks down the limits, and levels the peculiar characteristics of the different nations of the earth, but rather a unity, the result and product of those very national varieties and antagonistic qualities."

*At the Dinner of the Royal Academy, May 3, 1851:—*"Gentlemen! the production of all works in art or poetry requires in their conception and execution not only an exercise of the intellect, skill, and patience, but particularly a concurrent warmth of feeling and a free flow of imagination. This renders them most tender plants, which will thrive only in an atmosphere calculated to maintain that warmth; and that atmosphere is one of kindness, kindness towards the artist personally as well as towards his production. An unkind word of criticism passes like a cold blast over their tender shoots, and shrivels them up, checking the flow of the sap, which was rising to produce perhaps multitudes of flowers and fruit. But still criticism is absolutely necessary to the development of art, and the injudicious praise of an inferior work becomes an insult to superior genius. In this respect our times are peculiarly unfavourable when compared with those when Madonnas were painted in the seclusion of convents; for we have now on the one hand the eager competition of a vast array of artists of every degree of talent and skill, and on the other as judge, a great public, for the greater part wholly uneducated in art, and thus led by professional writers, who often strive to impress the public with a great idea of their own artistic knowledge by the merciless manner in which they treat works which cost those who produced them the highest efforts of mind or feeling. The works of art, by being publicly exhibited and offered for sale, are becoming articles of trade, following as such the unreasoning laws of markets and fashion; and public and even private patronage is swayed by their tyrannical influence."

*At the Banquet in Birmingham, on laying the first stone of the Birmingham and Midland Institute, November 22, 1855:—*"The study of the laws by which the Almighty governs the Universe is therefore our bounden duty. Of these laws our great academies and seats of education have, rather arbitrarily, selected only two spheres or groups (as I may call them) as essential parts of our national education—the laws which regulate quantities and proportions, which form the subject of mathematics; and the laws regulating the expression of our thoughts, through the medium of language, that is to say, grammar, which finds its purest expression in the classical languages. These laws are most important branches of knowledge, their study trains and elevates the mind, but they are not the only ones; there are others, which we



cannot disregard, which we cannot do without. There are, for instance, the laws governing the human mind, and its relation to the Divine Spirit (the subject of logic and metaphysics); there are those which govern our bodily nature and its connexion with the soul (the subject of physiology and psychology); those which govern human society, and the relations between man and man (the subjects of politics, jurisprudence, and political economy), and many others. Whilst of the laws just mentioned some have been recognised as essentials of education in different institutions, and some will by the course of time more fully assert their right to recognition, the laws regulating matter and form are those which will constitute the chief object of *your* pursuits; and, as the principle of subdivision of labour is the one most congenial to our age, I would advise you to keep to this speciality, and to follow with undivided attention chiefly the sciences of mechanics, physics, and chemistry, and the fine arts in painting, sculpture, and architecture."

*At a meeting of the Royal Agricultural Society at York, July 13, 1848:—*"Agriculture, which once was the main pursuit of this as of every other nation, holds, even now, notwithstanding the development of commerce and manufactures, a fundamental position in the realm. And, although time has changed the position which the owner of the land, with his feudal dependents, held in the empire, the country gentleman with his wife and children, the country clergyman, the tenant, and the labourer, still form a great and, I hope, united family, in which we gladly recognise the foundation of our social state. Science and mechanical improvement have, in these days, changed the mere practice of cultivating the soil into an industrial pursuit, requiring capital, machinery, industry and skill, and perseverance in the struggle of competition. This is another great change, but we must consider it a great *progress*, as it demands higher efforts and a higher intelligence."

*At the third Jubilee of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts, June 16, 1851:—*"We cannot help deploring that the Church, whose exertions for the progress of Christianity and civilization we are to-day acknowledging, should be afflicted by internal dissensions and attacks from without. I have no fear, however, for her safety and ultimate welfare, so long as she holds fast to what our ancestors gained for us at the Reformation, *the gospel and the unfettered right of its use*. The dissensions and difficulties which we witness in this as in every other Church, arise from the natural and necessary conflict of the two antagonistic principles which move human society in Church

as well as in State: I mean the principles of *individual liberty, and of allegiance and submission to the will of the community*, exacted by it for its own preservation. These conflicting principles cannot safely be disregarded; they must be reconciled. To this country belongs the honour of having succeeded in this mighty task, as far as the State is concerned, whilst other nations are still wrestling with it."

There is no reason to think but that, as these views are characteristically those which the Prince-Consort always urged in public, so the expression of them, as here given, was his own too. Matter and expression together, they surely reveal, when we allow for the necessary straitness of all such oratory, a mode of thought and feeling which we can regard as *princely* in a rather high sense of the word. No one among our numerous aristocratic orators on public occasions thought and talked in the same exact strain. It was distinguishably the Prince-Consort's. Putting the notion of his intellectual and moral qualities we so get along with others derived from other sources, are we not entitled to think, that, had his life been spared, a time might have possibly come—say in some conflict with the rest of the world, rolling Britain back upon herself, and evoking the full powers, without stint, of all who were capable to represent her—when such a mind would have been roused into more powerful and direct action than had before been required of it, and would have been watched as worthy of the emergency? As it is, just as the year 1861 is drawing to a close in prospects cloudy enough, these prospects are complicated, and our spirits in meeting them unsettled, by the calamity of his loss. He is gone; what he has been, we know; what he might have been, we know not. His widowed Queen (whom God comfort) survives as our Sovereign, dearer to us because of her great sorrow; and, a generation hence, his children, whom thrones and chances await, will look back to this then distant year, and think of their father prematurely lost to them!